

INSIDE TODAY

WORLD NEWS

KYRGYZ PROTEST



Protesters gather in front of the Kyrgyz government headquarters on central square in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Thursday, April 8, 2010. An opposition coalition proclaimed a new interim government Thursday in Kyrgyzstan after clashes left dozens dead nationwide and said it would rule until elections are held in six months.

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SPORTS NEWS

ROUSING RETURN



Tiger Woods tips his cap on the 18th green following his first round of the Masters golf tournament in Augusta, Ga., Thursday, April 8, 2010.

Read more on Page A



U.S. President Barack Obama, left, and his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev, right, sign a the New START nuclear arms reduction treaty at Prague Castle Thursday, April 8, 2010.

Associated Press

Nuke treaty signed, but menacing arms issues lurk

JENNIFER LOVEN

AP White House Correspondent

PRAGUE (AP) — The nuclear weapons cuts President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed in a landmark treaty would shrink the Cold War superpowers' arsenals to the lowest point since the frightening arms race of the 1960s. But they won't touch the "loose nukes" and suitcase bombs seen as the real menace in today's age of terrorism.

"This ceremony is a testament to the truth that old adversaries can forge new partnerships," Obama declared. "It is just one step on a longer journey."

The warheads covered by the treaty are lethal relics of the Cold War, and even with the planned reductions there will be enough firepower on each side to devastate the world many times over.

And of more immediate concern are attempts by terrorist groups such as al-Qaida and nations

such as Iran and North Korea to acquire or use nuclear weapons.

Obama and Medvedev showed solidarity for a spring showdown with Iran. And, beginning Monday, leaders of 47 countries will gather in Washington in an effort to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, crack down on illicit nuclear trafficking and lock down vulnerable nuclear materials around the world.

Introduced Thursday with trumpet fanfare, the two grinning presidents sat at an ornate table in Prague's hilltop presidential castle and put their signatures to a landmark successor to the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. Nearly a year in the making, the "New START" signaled a bold opening in previously soured U.S.-Russia relations. If ratified by both nations' legislatures, it will shrink the limit of nuclear warheads to 1,550 each over seven years, down about a third from the current ceiling of 2,200.

Continued on Next Page

Conditions improving for mine rescue effort

LAWRENCE MESSINA
VICKI SMITH

Associated Press Writers

MONTCOAL, West Virginia (AP) — Levels of noxious gas dropped Thursday in a coal mine where 25 workers died in an explosion, giving rescuers hope that they might be able to get inside soon to look for four still missing.

Teams spent more than four hours working their way through the Upper Big Branch mine by rail car and on foot in the morning, but had to turn back because of an explosive mix of gases in the area they needed to search.

Continued on Page 3

Afghan police: 5 suicide bombers arrested in Kabul

AMIR SHAH
CHRISTOPHER BODEEN

Associated Press Writers

KABUL (AP) — Acting on an intelligence tip, Afghan police said they arrested five would-be suicide bombers Thursday as they tried to enter Kabul, thwarting a major attack and capturing the largest such team ever in the capital.

Police believe the bombers were sent by an al-Qaida-linked insurgent group based in Pakistan, and their capture follows widespread rumors that militants were planning attacks in the diplomatic quarter of Kabul.

Continued on Page 6

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NUKE TREATY**Continued from Front Page**

Ratification in the U.S. Senate will hardly be automatic, requiring 67 votes in the 100-member chamber during a congressional election year when cooperation can be hard to come by.

Beyond that, urgent international nuclear tasks still face the two leaders.

For example, they are trying to forge agreement among themselves and four other nations — China, France, Britain, and Germany — on how to tackle Iran's continued defiance of United Nations demands that it cease enriching uranium. The West insists Tehran seeks to develop nuclear weapons; Tehran says it is after peaceful nuclear power.

At Obama's side, Medvedev made Russia's support for considering a fourth round of U.N. sanctions on Iran clearer than ever. "We cannot turn a blind eye to this," he said of Tehran's intransigence.

But that was not the main question heading into the leaders' talks, which ran overtime to about two hours. At issue, as representatives from the six partners prepare for what Obama called "ramped-up" discussions in New York, is how weak any new sanctions regime would need to be to get Moscow on board — not to mention China, an even more stubborn holdout.

Medvedev said sanctions should be "smart" — designed to change behavior, not to bring down the hardline Iranian government or impose hardship on Iran's people. The Russian leader said he had outlined for Obama "our limits for such sanctions," and Obama Russia expert Mike McFaul said those discussions got very specific.

"In all negotiations, people talk about their red lines and their bottom lines and we negotiate," McFaul said. White House officials would not reveal details of the private conversation, concerned that it could threaten progress. But Russia's deputy foreign minister, Sergei Ryabkov, said that a total embargo on refined petroleum products into Iran, which depends heavily on such imports, was out of the question for Moscow.

There is talk of hitting refined petroleum product deliveries some other way, but sanctions

on Iran's energy sector may be jettisoned altogether as too tough for Russia or China.

Obama repeated his flat declaration that "strong tough sanctions" will be agreed to this spring. He said "we will not tolerate" any actions by Iran that risk a new arms race in the Middle East or threaten the security of the international community.

The president faces another key test in that drive when he meets Chinese President Hu Jintao in Washington on the sidelines of Monday's 47-nation summit.

Even as the U.S.-Russia deal was signed in Prague, the White House was deeply engaged in the uncertain Senate ratification fight in Washington.

With Obama needing to cajole at least eight Republicans into supporting the treaty to win



President Barack Obama, with Russian president Dmitry Medvedev, left, and Czech Republic president Vaclav Klaus, toast with champagne at the Prague Castle in Prague, Thursday, April 8, 2010.

the required 67 votes, Brian McKeon, a senior foreign policy adviser to Vice President

Joe Biden, was named to head out to lobby senators, in person the effort. Administration and via videoconference from negotiators also began fanning Prague. □

Associated Press

NC GOP wants national party head Steele to quit

By **GARY D. ROBERTSON**

Associated Press Writer

RALEIGH, N.C. — The head of the North Carolina Republican Party asked Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Steele to step down Thursday, saying the resignation is the only way to end scrutiny of the national party over lavish spending. A day earlier, national party leaders had a conference call with Steele but didn't bring up the prospect of his resignation — seen as a positive sign for the embattled national chairman.

North Carolina's Tom Fetzter is the first state party chairman to call for Steele's resignation, a spokesman for Fetzter said. Fetzter said the move would ensure Republicans maximize gains during the mid-term elections.

"I believe that the best service you can render to your party at this critical juncture is to graciously step aside and allow the party to move on from this current quagmire," Fetzter wrote in a letter to Steele.

Steele, who has been a lightning rod for criticism since taking the job last year, has come under renewed scrutiny recently after the committee paid a nearly \$2,000 bill at a sex-themed nightclub in Los Angeles. The RNC fired a staffer it blamed for the outing.

Instances of questionable RNC purchases continued to surface on Thursday. RNC spokeswoman Katie Wright said a \$1,000 purchase from jeweler Tiffany & Co. was used to buy gifts for major donors. The purchase was listed as "office supplies," but Wright said that's the catchall category that the RNC and other political organizations often use for such gifts.

The RNC had also paid \$18,361 over the past several months to the Tiny Jewel Box, a Washington, D.C., jewelry store, for "office supplies," which may have included trinkets or gifts for big donors.

Also this week, Steele accepted the resignation of his chief of staff and allowed one of his senior advisers to leave in an attempt to reassure GOP donors upset about his leadership.

Fetzter, a former mayor of Raleigh, said local activists have been upset in North Carolina over the past few weeks about Steele's leadership.

He told Steele he should step down because "recent events, regardless of who is to blame, have made it difficult if not impossible for you to lead the party in the direction that it needs to go."

Steele said earlier in the week he would not resign and defended his stewardship of party affairs. He dismissed criticism — some



In this Feb. 3, 2010 file photo Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Steele speaks at the John F. Kennedy School of Government on the campus of Harvard University, in Cambridge, Mass. Sean Mahoney, A New Hampshire activist has resigned from the Republican National Committee, adding to the pressures chairman Michael Steele faces from a party frustrated with his stewardship heading into crucial midterm elections.

Associated Press

of it centered on spending on flights, limousines and high-dollar hotels — as griping by GOP figures uncomfortable with his "streetwise" managerial style.

Responding to Fetzter's letter, RNC spokesman LeRoy Coleman said Steele "has maintained broad support from RNC committee members, who have been pleased with the proactive measures put in place for greater accountability. Most importantly, the RNC remains focused on raising money and winning elections in North Carolina and across the country this fall."

The national GOP also attempted to rebut Fetzter by releasing comments of support for Steele from Tennessee chairman Chris Devaney and RNC member Bruce Ash of Arizona.

The RNC also raised \$2 million less than the Democratic National Committee in March.

The North Carolina chairman's criticism came just a month after Fetzter had only positive words for Steele at a Greensboro news conference where Steele unveiled a fundraising ad.

"This is not a personal indictment of you," Fetzter wrote to Steele. □

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MINE RESCUE

Continued from Front Page

Crews at the surface resumed drilling in an effort to get fresh air into the mine. Gov. Joe Manchin said Thursday evening that the levels were near those considered safe.

"We're just moving as quickly as we can," Manchin said. "We want to bring the loved ones back."

Rescue teams had made it within 500 feet of an airtight chamber with four days worth of food, water and oxygen where they hoped the miners might have sought refuge Monday after the worst U.S. mining disaster in more than two decades.

Chris Adkins, chief operating officer for mine owner Massey Energy Co., said the rescue teams were "very angry" when told to abandon the mission, but their safety was paramount. He said the teams are off their feet and resting, but too anxious to sleep.

Massey's chief executive officer, Don Blankenship, continued to defend his company's record and disputed accusations from miners that he puts coal profits ahead of safety.

"To some extent the fact that there were more survivors than those that are lost suggests that the mine was in pretty good shape relative to what mines would have been in the past and hopefully by today's standards," he told The Associated Press in an interview Thursday. There were 61 miners in Upper Big Branch when it was rocked by the blast.

Despite the increasingly slim chance of finding anyone alive, Adkins said he considers the Thursday's effort a rescue mission.

"I still believe in God, I believe, and I'm not gonna give up," he said.

The rescue crews did not get far enough to see the bodies of the dead or if anyone had

made it to the chamber. They knew where the bodies would be because rescuers made it that far before gases forced them out of the mine after the explosion Monday.

Officials were not sure what caused the high gas levels this time but said a drop in barometric pressure as a storm rolled in might be to blame.

The rescue crews were leaving their equipment behind so they did not have to lug it back in with them when they returned.

Kevin Stricklin of the federal Mine Health and Safety Administration said the families understood the need to pull rescuers out.

"It's a roller coaster for these people," Stricklin said. "It's very emotional. You can only imagine what it would be like."

Rescuers had already had to wait to enter the mine until crews drilled holes deep into the earth to ventilate lethal carbon monoxide and highly explosive hydrogen as well as methane gas, which has been blamed for the explosion.

The air quality was deemed safe enough early in the day for four teams of eight members each to go in, but

later tests showed the air was too dangerous to continue.

Adkins said rescue teams described seeing evidence of "a horrendous explosion and a lot of destruction."

He also said they may have found an alternate route that will allow them to get where they need to be faster when they can safely go back in.

Once that happens, rescuers will have to walk through an area officials have described as strewn with bodies, twisted railroad track, shattered concrete block walls and vast amounts of dust. Each team member wears 30 pounds of breathing equipment, lugs first-aid equipment and must try to see through total darkness with only a cap lamp to light the way.

Even some family members acknowledged they didn't expect to find any of the four missing miners alive days after the massive explosion.

"In my honest opinion, if anyone else survives it, I will be surprised," said James Griffith, who works at the mine. His brother, William "Bob" Griffith, went to work Monday and never came home. William Griffith's brother-in-law, Carl Acord, died in the explosion. □



J. Christopher Adkins, chief operating officer of Massey Energy Co., speaks in Montcoal, W.Va. Wednesday, April 8, 2010. Adkins says that more drilling is needed to help clear a West Virginia mine of dangerous gases so that rescue teams go underground again.

Associated Press



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Tea party leaders announce new federation

BRIANA BIRSCHBACH,
Associated Press Writer
ST. PAUL, Minnesota (AP) — Several "tea party" leaders announced plans Thursday to form a national federation to promote the movement's conservative message and to counter the idea that the tea parties are politically unsophisticated and disorganized. Tea party leaders from Memphis, Tennessee, Richmond, Virginia, and Orlando, Florida, along with

representatives of several other groups announced the new National Tea Party Federation during a rally outside the Minnesota Capitol. They said 21 tea party groups around the nation had joined the federation. Memphis Tea Party founder Mark Skoda said recent media coverage had questioned whether the conservative tea parties, which number in the thousands nationwide, were

too loosely organized to be politically effective in the national midterm election. He said the federation intends to convey a unified message about the tea party's brand of fiscal conservatism, which emphasizes limited government, less public spending and free markets. He said the organization also hopes to rebut allegations about the movement: "Everything from calling the tea party members racist, that we are violent, that somehow we are fermenting another Kristallnacht. These accusations are indeed false and they won't stand." The organizers said that the federation does not intend to direct activities by the farflung groups, but to improve communications among them, along with

affiliate groups such as Americans for Tax Reform, Let Freedom Ring and Citizens United. One of the affiliated organizations, the Family Research Council, works primarily to oppose abortion rights and gay marriage. Skoda said the tea party movement would not make those issues part of its core mission but could still find points of common ground with conservative social-issue groups. "The family needs to have low tax rates, choice on health care, no mandate on health care, and the autonomy to make decisions. The family is an important part of our strategy," Skoda said. Many tea party groups don't have formal memberships

but Skoda said the movement represents about 500,000 people. Republican U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann of Minnesota, a tea party favorite, participated in the rally. The tea party activists are a loose-knit coalition of community groups largely made up of people with conservative and libertarian views who say government has grown too large, threatening individual liberties. The movement's name is taken from the Boston Tea Party, a 1773 protest in which activists in the then-British colonies in America boarded ships and threw their cargo of English tea into Boston Harbor in a symbolic act of protest against taxes. □

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AP sources: Diplomat was to meet jailed terrorist

MATTHEW LEE
P. SOLOMON BANDA

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Qatari diplomat was on his way to an official visit with an imprisoned al-Qaida sleeper agent when he touched off a bomb scare by slipping into an airline bathroom for a smoke, officials said Thursday as the diplomat prepared to leave the U.S.

The diplomat, Mohammed Al-Madadi, was going to pay a consular visit to the prisoner, said Alison Bradley, a public relations executive hired to speak for the Qatari Embassy, and a State Department official.

The prisoner, Ali Al-Marri, a citizen of Qatar, is serving eight years after pleading guilty last year to conspiring to support terrorism. Al-Marri was arrested after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, accused of being a sleeper agent researching poisonous gasses and plotting a cyberattack.

Consular officials frequently visit foreigners held in the United States to make sure they are being treated well.

Bradley said Qatari diplomats have made multiple visits to Al-Marri in prison since he pleaded guilty. The right to such visits is guaranteed by international agreements, and the U.S. Bureau of Prisons had approved this visit by Al-Madadi in advance.

Questions remained about why a diplomat on an official trip, like Al-Madadi, would apparently flout airline security rules. Law enforcement officials said Al-Madadi later joked that he had been trying to light his shoe — an apparent reference to the 2001 so-called shoe bomber, Richard Reid.

The U.S. officials who discussed the case did so on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter.

No explosives were found on the plane and authorities said they don't think Al-Madadi was trying to hurt anyone during Wednesday's scare. He enjoys diplomatic immunity from U.S. prosecution and will not be criminally charged, authorities said.

The State Department official said Qatar had not yet informed the administration how it will handle the case but has assured the U.S. that Al-Madadi will leave the country. U.S. officials

expect that to happen later Thursday or Friday.

"We fully expect this will be resolved very quickly," State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley told reporters.

Crowley said the U.S. government is satisfied that the Qatari government is taking the matter seriously.

Wednesday's scare came three months after the attempted terror attack on Christmas when a Nigerian man allegedly tried to blow up a Detroit-

bound airliner. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab went to the bathroom just before he allegedly tried to ignite a bomb in his seat. Since then, law enforcement, flight crews and passengers have been on high alert for suspicious activity on airplanes. That scare exposed major holes in the country's national security and prompted immediate changes in terror-screening policies.

Some air travelers at Denver International Airport Thursday

were amazed that Al-Madadi would not be charged with anything. □

This handout photo provided by Washington Life Magazine, taken March 25, 2010, shows Qatari diplomat Mohammed Al-Madadi at the Qatar Embassy in Washington. Al-Madadi sparked a bomb security scare after sneaking a smoke in an airplane's bathroom will likely be sent home or transferred to another country, U.S. officials said Thursday.

Associated Press



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Alleged five suicide bombers are seen handcuffed near a vehicle which police said was used by them at the Afghan National Police crisis unit's headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan on Thursday, April 8, 2010. Afghan police arrested the five would-be suicide bombers Thursday in Kabul — the largest suicide bomb team ever apprehended in the capital, officials said.

Associated Press

SUICIDE BOMBERS

Continued from Front Page

Heavily armed police stopped the would-be bombers about 7 a.m. at a checkpoint in the southeastern edge of the city as they traveled in an SUV with explosive vests hidden beneath the engine block, according to Abdul Ghafar, deputy commander of the Afghan National Police crisis unit.

Ghafar said police had been given a description of the vehicle and were able to seal off the area. Police said they believed the would-be bombers were headed for a safe house somewhere in the capital to make final preparations for their suicide assault.

"If this team had made it through it would have been a disaster," Ghafar said. "I would call this a major blow

to the terrorists."

Police said the five men — ranged in age from 20 to 25 — refused to give their names or nationalities. But authorities were convinced they were sent by the Haqqani group, a Pakistan-based Afghan Taliban faction with close ties to al-Qaida.

A Taliban spokesman, Zabiullah Mujahid, said the Taliban were unaware of the apparent plot, saying "we have no information on these people."

The five were shown to journalists at a heavily guarded police base on the city's outskirts, along with their vehicle and bags containing explosive material and suicide harnesses.

They stood silently with their backs to the journalists, their eyes covered by blindfolds and hoods and their wrists in handcuffs.

The Haqqani group has been blamed for other attacks in Kabul, including the Oct. 28 assault on a guesthouse used

by U.N. workers. Eleven people were killed, including five U.N. staff and the three attackers. It may have played a role in the Dec. 30 suicide attack that killed seven CIA employees and a Jordanian intelligence officer at a tightly secured CIA base in Khost province.

The network's ailing leader, Jalaluddin Haqqani, was a hero of the war against the Soviets in the 1980s. A U.S. missile strike Feb. 18 apparently targeted Haqqani's son Sirajuddin, who effectively runs the group. Instead the missile killed another son, Mohammed, and three associates.

The last major attack within Kabul took place Feb. 26 when suicide bombers struck two small hotels in the center of the city, killing at least 16 people, including six Indians. Afghan authorities blamed the attack on Lashkar-e-Taiba, the same group India blames for the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks that killed 166 people. For several weeks, security

officials have warned of militant plans to launch more attacks in two Kabul neighborhoods that are effectively the city's diplomatic quarter. The assaults were purportedly designed to show the militants can strike in the capital at a time when they are under pressure from U.S., Afghan and NATO forces in southern Afghanistan.

NATO is gearing up a major operation to drive the Taliban from Kandahar, the biggest city in the south and birthplace of the Islamic militant movement.

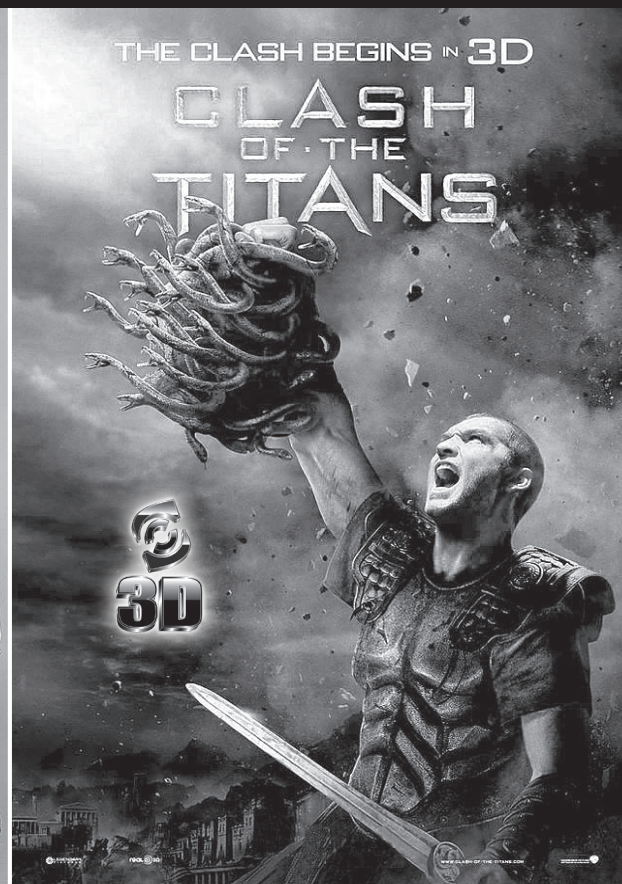
Also Thursday, NATO reported one international service member was killed in fighting with insurgents in eastern Afghanistan but gave no further details. It was the 10th combat death among the NATO force this month.

In the southern town of Marjah, the Taliban killed a local tribal leader, his nephew and three other people, government spokesman Daud Ahmadi said. □



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	matinee:	1:00	3:30	late show:	11:15
PG-13	THE BOUNTY HUNTER				
	daily:	4:00	6:30	9:00	
	matinee:	1:30		late show:	11:45
R	REMEMBER ME				
	daily:	4:45	7:15	9:45	
	matinee:	2:00		late show:	12:15
R	BROOKLYN'S FINEST				
	daily:	6:00	8:45		
	matinee:	12:00	3:00	late show:	11:30
PG-13	WHY DID I GET MARRIED TOO				
	daily:	5:45	8:45		
	matinee:	12:00	2:45	late show:	11:30
PG	ALICE IN WONDERLAND				
	daily:	5:30	8:00		
	matinee:	12:45	3:15	late show:	11:00

AT PASEO HERENCIA

PG-13	DATE NIGHT				NEW
	daily:	4:00	6:15	8:30	
	matinee:			late show:	11:00
R	COP OUT				
	daily:	6:15	9:00		
	matinee:	1:00	3:45	late show:	11:30
PG	HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON				
	daily:	4:15	6:30	8:45	
	matinee:	1:45		late show:	11:15
PG-13	OUR FAMILY WEDDING				
	daily:	5:30	7:45	9:45	
	matinee:	12:45	3:00	late show:	12:00
PG	DIARY OF A WIMPY KID				
	daily:				
	matinee:	12:00	2:00	late show:	
R	GREEN ZONE				
	daily:	6:30	9:15		
	matinee:	1:15	3:45	late show:	11:45
R	SHE'S OUT OF MY LEAGUE				
	daily:	5:45	8:15		
	matinee:	12:30	3:15	late show:	11:00



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Slum disappears in Rio mudslide; 200 feared dead

BRADLEY BROOKS

Associated Press Writer

NITEROI, Brazil (AP) — They are all gone. The Evangelical church where worshippers were praying. A daycare center where kids were playing. The pizza parlor where a family was eating.

All were buried under a mountain of mud, garbage and stone when yet another landslide hit metropolitan Rio de Janeiro late Wednesday. This one swept through the Morro Bumba slum, engulfing as many as 200 people and 60 homes. Nothing was left behind but a massive crater of blackened, sodden earth and the remnants of flimsy brick shacks.

"I had just picked up my 10-year-old son from the day care. We walked down the hill to the street, and within 10 minutes, my community collapsed," said Patricia Faria, 28, crying as she watched heavy machinery dump the remains of her life into a waiting truck. "All I have left is what you see on me — and my son. Thank God, I have my son."

Rio state health secretary Sergio Cortes said it was hard to say how many people were buried in the latest slide. "A worse-case scenario is 200," he told The Associated Press. "We know that about 60 houses were buried."

Already 161 people have been confirmed dead in the heavy rains that began Monday in Rio, most of them swept away in landslides that roared through city slums built on steep, unstable hillsides.

The death toll surpasses that of flooding and mudslides in the southern state of Santa Catarina in 2008, which killed nearly 130 people and displaced about 80,000.

"In our experience, it's an instant death," Pedro Machado, undersecretary of Rio state's Civil Defense department, said of the victims buried

by landslides.

Faria said she was certain people were buried inside the Morro Bumba slum's Assembly of God church, which collapsed during nightly services.

Clesio Araujo, 39, said he narrowly escaped the slide, leaving a pizza parlor just a few minutes before the earth gave way. He said a family was still inside.

The destruction was compounded because the slum is largely built atop an old garbage dump, making it especially unstable and vulnerable to the heavy rains, said Agostinho Guerreiro, president of Rio's main association of engineers and architects.

"It is very fragile soil. It couldn't hold. The houses came down, destroying the ones below them," Guerreiro told Globo TV. "It was a tragedy foretold."

The federal government announced an emergency fund of \$114 million to help Rio state, where the slum is located, to deal with the mudslides and flooding.

But the money will be of little help to people who have no choice but to live in such precarious sections of the city, said Rosana Fernandes, 43, whose sister, brother-in-law and two young nieces were buried under the mud.

Holding a faded photo of the smiling family, she didn't bother holding back the tears as she explained what it is that leads families to live atop a landfill formed by decades of accumulated garbage.

"Yes, it was a dump. But people are desperate to have a home anywhere," she said. "What else were they going to do? Where else were they supposed to go? This is our reality. They knew the risks, but when you have no money, you have no choice," she said.

Rio officials said they are going to step up



Firefighters search for people buried by a landslide in the Morro do Bumba area of the Niteroi neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro, Thursday, April 8, 2010. At least 200 people were buried and feared dead under the latest landslide to hit a slum in Rio de Janeiro's metropolitan area, authorities said Thursday.

Associated Press

forced evictions of slum residents living in at-risk areas. Mayor Eduardo Paes announced that 1,500 families are going to be removed from their homes in at least two Rio slums, and that more evictions are likely.

Officials from Rio state's Civil Defense department said that at least 14,000 people were forced from their homes by the mudslides and that potential slides threatened at least 10,000 other houses in the city.

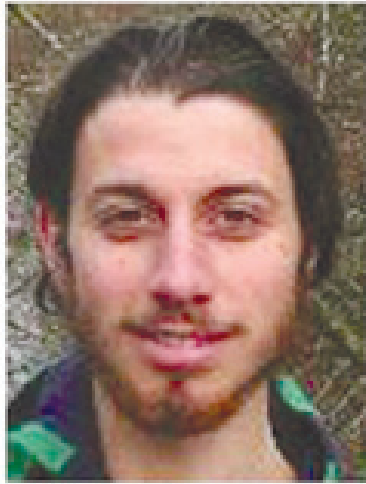
On Thursday, scores of rescue workers poked at the massive mountain of earth that slid down the hills of the Morro

Bumba slum toward a paved road in Niteroi, Rio's sister city of 500,000 people across the Guanabara Bay.

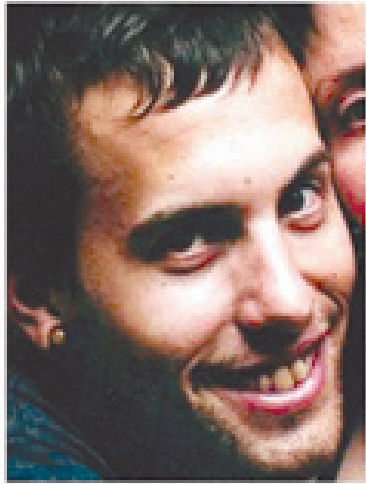
Mounds of soil and garbage rose 40 feet high. A dozen dump trucks were lined up to carry off the debris. Hundreds of onlookers watched as firefighters carried at least four coffins out of the crater created by the slide.

Homeless residents sought shelter in two Evangelical churches just down the road from the slum, where water, food and clothing were handed out. Small children played and slept on dozens of mattresses laid out on church floors. □

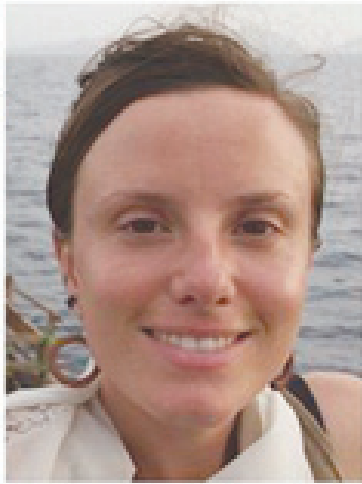
Iran: Jailed Americans linked to U.S. intelligence



Joshua Fattal



Shane Bauer



Sarah Shourd

This combination of undated file photos released by freethikers.org shows, from left: Joshua Fattal, Shane Bauer and Sarah Shourd. The families of the three Americans detained in Iran for months say their loved ones have been allowed to call home for the first time. The families said in a statement Wednesday, March 10, 2010, that they received the calls Tuesday. The three reported being well. The families called the conversations "a tremendous relief."

Associated Press

NASSER KARIMI

Associated Press Writer

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's intelligence minister accused three Americans jailed since crossing the border from Iraq in July of having links to U.S. intelligence services, state TV reported.

The comments toughened Iran's accusations against the group, suggesting authorities could be close to bringing them to trial after months of mixed signals and fears in the U.S. that they could be used as bargaining chips in Iran's confrontation with the West.

CAI106

Their families say the three were on a hike in the scenic Kurdish region of northern Iraq and unintentionally strayed across the border. Iran has accused them of spying and said it intends to bring them to trial.

Iran's English-language satellite channel Press TV said Intelligence Minister Heidar Moslehi told the station in an exclusive interview that Tehran has "credible evidence" the three were linked to U.S. intelligence. He did not elaborate but said the evidence would be revealed to news media soon.

It was the first time a senior official has said the three were tied to U.S. intelligence.

Moslehi also warned neighboring countries against cooperating with U.S. and Israeli intelligence, the report said.

Press TV briefly showed footage of the minister speaking but did not air his comments in full. Instead, a news anchor read out a summary of the main points.

Josh Fattal, 27, Shane Bauer, 27, and Sarah Shourd, 31, were trekking in Iraq's northern Kurdistan region on July 31 when they accidentally crossed the border into Iran,

according to their families.

Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said in December that he expected a speedy trial for the three. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has questioned the Americans' intentions but said he would do his best to free them.

In November, however, Ahmadinejad said the United States was holding several Iranian citizens, raising concern that his government might be seeking to use the Americans in a deal.

The hikers' parents and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton have appealed for their release.

The continued detention of the Americans comes amid a bitter standoff between the U.S. and Iran over Tehran's disputed nuclear program.

The U.S. has no diplomatic relations with Iran. The last word on the Americans' conditions came in March when they called home, their families said. □



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Kyrgyz opposition says it will rule for six months

PETER LEONARD

Associated Press Writer

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan (AP)

— Consolidating their victory after a bloody uprising, opposition leaders declared Thursday they would hold power in Kyrgyzstan for six months and assured the U.S. it can keep a strategic air base here — at least for now.

There were signs of instability, though, as deposed President Kurmanbek Bakiyev refused to relinquish power after the revolt, which left at least 75 people dead and hundreds wounded. As he spoke, gunfire broke out after nightfall in the capital, Bishkek.

With darkness descending, roving bands of armed marauders trawled the streets of the capital, despite warnings from the opposition leadership that looters would be shot.

Crowds gathering at the ransacked government headquarters earlier in the day angrily shouted anti-Bakiyev slogans. Still, the mood was subdued as residents came to terms with the scale of the violence unleashed against the mostly unarmed protesters by government troops a day earlier.

Newly appointed Kyrgyz security officials warned they would use every means to restore calm and bring an end to the nighttime lawlessness that terrorized Bishkek after Wednesday's clashes.

The former Soviet nation is home to a key U.S. military base supporting the fighting in Afghanistan that opposition figures have in the past said they wanted to see shut down. Kyrgyzstan also hosts a Russian military base and is the only nation where both Cold War foes have bases.

Roza Otunbayeva, a former foreign minister now heading the interim government, said there were no plans yet to review the lease agreement for the Manas air base, which runs out in July. She said her government would meet U.S. diplomats for talks in Bishkek.

"Give us time, it will take time for us to understand and fix the situation," Otunbayeva said.

U.S. military officials said



Opposition lawmaker Isa Omurkulov speaks to protesters as they gather in front of Kyrgyz government headquarters on the central square in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Thursday, April 8, 2010. An opposition coalition in Kyrgyzstan said it has formed an interim government that will rule the turbulent Central Asian nation for six months. Opposition leader Roza Otunbayeva said Thursday she will head the government that dissolved the parliament and will take up legislative duties.

Associated Press

Kyrgyzstan halted flights for 12 hours Wednesday, confining troops to the air base; they did not say if flights had resumed. Some 1,100 troops are stationed there, including contingents from Spain and France, in support of NATO operations in Afghanistan.

President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev discussed Kyrgyzstan before signing an arms treaty in Prague on Thursday.

Michael McFaul, Obama's senior director for Russian affairs, emphasized that the U.S. did not view the conflict as any kind of proxy struggle between the U.S. and Russia.

"The people that are allegedly running Kyrgyzstan ... these are all people we've had contact with for many years," McFaul said. "This is not some anti-American coup, that we know for sure. And this is not some sponsored-by-the-Russians coup, there's just no evidence of that."

Kyrgyzstan shares a 533-mile border with China and is a gateway to energy-rich Central Asian countries where the U.S., China and Russia are competing for dominance. China said it was "deeply concerned" about the violent uprising in its small western neighbor, echoing comments by the United States and

Russia.

Otunbayeva said parliament had been dissolved and that she would head an interim government for six months before elections are called. She said the new government controlled four of the country's seven regions and called for Bakiyev to admit defeat.

"His business in Kyrgyzstan is finished," she said.

In a sign that Russia may lend its support to the opposition, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin called Otunbayeva on Thursday. Any suggestion that Russia is backing the new leadership would add to the pressure on Bakiyev to step down.

Russia sent in 150 paratroopers to its base to ensure the safety of the 400 military personnel and their families there, Russian state media reported. Bakiyev, who fled the northern capital for his stronghold in the south, told a Russian radio station that "I don't admit defeat in any way." But he also said he recognized that "even though I am president, I don't have any real levers of power."

"What has taken place is a veritable orgy carried out by armed groups and I do not believe this is a defeat for me," Bakiyev said.

He spoke from southern Jalal-Abad region, where Bakiyev's

popularity is said to remain high — raising concerns he might try to secure his survival by exploiting the split between the more urban north and rural south.

It was unclear if Bakiyev has any armed forces under his command. However, Koshbai Masirov, a government loyalist and former governor of Jalal-Abad, said Bakiyev had addressed people in the region and he expected him to retain their support.

Meanwhile, the newly appointed interim defense minister, Ismail Isakov, said the armed forces had joined the opposition and would not be used against protesters.

"Special forces and the military were used against civilians in Bishkek, Talas and other places," Isakov said. "This will not happen in the future." Since coming to power in 2005 amid street protests known as the Tulip Revolution, Bakiyev had ensured a measure of stability. But the opposition said it came at the expense of democratic standards and accused Bakiyev of enriching himself and his family.

Piles of ash and smoldering debris filled the street Thursday outside the monolithic government headquarters, known as the White House, where marauders set fire to ransacked goods and trash

overnight.

Jubilant young men stood atop gutted vehicles outside the building. Nearby, youths piled onto an armored personnel carrier, victoriously holding their arms aloft.

Fading bloodstains were still visible outside the White House, where dozens were killed by armed troops a day earlier. Young boys scurried in and out of the building, carrying away looted carpets. As afternoon approached, the crowds swelled. But a somber mood hung in the air as one-minute tributes for those killed in the violence punctuated speeches by politicians and opposition supporters.

As night fell, gunshots rang out around Bishkek, where rumors spread of an attempt by armed Bakiyev loyalists to sow panic. The city of 1 million was plunged into darkness, with hotels and homeowners afraid to turn on their lights for fear of attracting attention.

Throughout the day, many expressed a sense of uneasy wariness about the future.

"We have kicked out Bakiyev, the people have taken power into their own hands, but we have no plans for the future," said Abdykerim Sadykov, a 42-year-old teacher in the crowd outside the White House. "We will wait until the opposition hatches a plan."

On Thursday, details emerged of the composition of the interim Cabinet, which has been drawn from a broad spectrum of opposition leaders, whose differences in the past have undermined attempts to weaken Bakiyev. One area of consensus was on the decision to repeal sharp increases in heating and electricity bills that provoked widespread anger and helped precipitate this week's violence.

Otunbayeva's announcement at a packed briefing that cheap utilities would be restored and the recent privatization of a power company annulled elicited cheers and clapping from supporters crowding the hall.

But beyond the issue of utilities, the new team of ministers may have trouble forging a united platform. □

Oprah Winfrey plans nighttime show on her network



FILE - In this March 7, 2010 file photo, Oprah Winfrey is shown at the Governors Ball following the the 82nd Academy Awards in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

(AP Photo/Chris Pizzello, file)

By **FRAZIER MOORE**,
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK — Oprah Winfrey has reigned in daytime for a quarter-century, but she'll be moving to nights to host a show on her brand-new cable channel.

The program makeup of the much-anticipated Oprah Winfrey Network became clearer Thursday with the announcement of five new

series. These include "Oprah's Next Chapter," which should reassure viewers that Winfrey will appear on the 24-hour network she'll largely be guiding from behind the scenes.

"My vision for OWN is to create a network that inspires our viewers and makes them want to be who they are on their best day," said Winfrey, 56, in a statement.

But her millions of fans will want to see her, not just feel her, and on a regular basis. "Oprah's New Chapter" seems a promising start.

Each edition will release her from the studio and her longtime talk-show format for conversations and travel around the world.

"From the Taj Mahal to her beloved oak tree, the Great Wall to her own teahouse, it's a whole new kind of Oprah show," according to the network. "If she can dream it, she'll do it!"

"Oprah's Next Chapter" is scheduled to premiere in late 2011. That will be shortly after Winfrey lays to rest her

weekday syndicated talk show at the close of its 25th season, a milestone she said "feels right in my bones" when she voiced her plans on the air last November.

A joint venture of Winfrey's Harpo Inc. and Discovery Communications Inc., OWN: The Oprah Winfrey Network is now set to sign on Jan. 1 after missing two earlier deadlines. It will be available in approximately 80 million homes, replacing the Discovery Health Channel.

Other shows announced Thursday for OWN include:

"Visionaries: Inside the Creative Mind," on which big-name talents take viewers inside their creative process, offering an opportunity to see how they bring their art to life. Included on the roster are Academy Award-winning director James Cameron, Grammy Award-winning musician Lady Gaga and photographer Annie Leibovitz.

"Your Own Show: Oprah's Search for the Next TV Star," produced with reality TV giant

Mark Burnett, will mount a nationwide search to discover the next big TV personality.

"Gayle King Live!" brings to TV the morning radio show of Oprah's best friend.

"Why Not? With Shania Twain" is a reality show chronicling the trials and triumphs of the top-selling country music star.

These new series join a slate of previously announced shows including: "Behind the Scenes: The Oprah Show Final Season," a "docuseries" that takes viewers behind the scenes of the final season of "The Oprah Winfrey Show."

"Breaking Down the Bars," billed as a prison show whose women inmates have a shot at rehabilitation and atonement.

"Enough Already" sends home-organization guru Peter Walsh on a quest to help people declutter their lives.

"In the Bedroom With Dr. Laura Berman" aims to help couples improve their relationships and sex lives.

"Inside With Lisa Ling" brings viewers reports on unexpected people from far-

flung locations.

"Kidnapped by the Kids" sets the stage for parents caught up in a world disconnected by technology and hectic lifestyles to get a wake-up call when their kids take drastic steps to reclaim Mom and Dad.

"The Miracle Detectives" sets a believer and a skeptic on the trail of amazing events that couldn't possibly have happened — or could they?

"Oprah Presents: Master Class" features prominent personalities hand-picked by Oprah (including Bono, Simon Cowell, Lorne Michaels and Condoleezza Rice) who share their stories, insights and lives.

"The Swell Life" takes a look inside the family of former competitive surfer Izzy Paskowitz, his wife, Danielle, and their three children (one of whom is autistic), as well as their surf-school business.

"Searching" puts search specialist and genealogist Pam Slaton on the trail of long-lost friends and family members □

Kate Gosselin returning to TLC with new series



FILE - In this Oct. 26, 2009 file photo, Kate Gosselin speaks at the Women's Conference 2009 Night at the Village at The Long Beach Convention Center in Long Beach, Calif. Gosselin is returning to TLC with a new reality show, 'Twist of Kate.' The TLC network said Thursday, April 8, 2010 that the new show, 'Twist of Kate,' will follow Gosselin as she visits the homes and workplaces of her subjects, where she will exchange insights for living. The 12-episode season premieres in late summer.

(AP Photo/Katy Winn, file)

NEW YORK — Kate Gosselin is launching a series that will profile everyday women facing personal challenges.

"Twist of Kate" will follow the reality star and supermom as she visits the homes and workplaces of her subjects, where she will exchange insights for living. The 12-episode season will premiere in late summer, the TLC network said Thursday.

The single mother of young twins and sextuplets, Gosselin will also revisit her family life for a series of "Kate Plus 8" specials beginning in June.

Kate and her then-husband Jon starred for several seasons in the hit reality series "Jon & Kate Plus 8," which collapsed last fall as the couple's marriage fell apart.

This week, Jon Gosselin sued his ex-wife for primary custody of their eight children.

Gosselin's attorney, Anthony List, has previously accused Kate Gosselin of neglecting the children because she appears on ABC's "Dancing With the Stars," a charge her attorney rejected as "patently false." □



FILE - In a Tuesday, September 15, 2009 file photo, actor Nicolas Cage arrives for the screening of his film 'Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans' at the Toronto International Film Festival. A Bel-Air Tudor mansion owned by Cage found no takers at auction. The mansion reverted to the foreclosing lender at auction Wednesday, April 7, 2010 in Pomona, Calif.

(AP Photo/The Canadian Press, Chris Young)

No one buys Nicolas Cage's mansion at auction

LOS ANGELES — A Bel-Air mansion owned by Nicolas Cage has found no takers in a foreclosure auction.

The opening bid for the actor's 12,000-square-foot home was \$10.4 million, but there are \$18 million worth of loans on the property.

The Tudor mansion boasts six bedrooms, a central tower, home theater and an Olympic-sized pool. The house reverted to the foreclosing lender at Wednesday's auction in Pomona. Even though he's one of Hollywood's highest-paid stars, Cage has money troubles. He owes millions in unpaid taxes and in January his foreclosed home in Las Vegas sold for nearly \$5 million.

Cage sued his former business manager in October for \$20 million, claiming the man's advice led him toward financial ruin. The ex-manager says Cage is a spendthrift.

BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

Shoppers hand retailers a basket of Easter cash

By MAE ANDERSON,
AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK – Shoppers are finally coming out of hibernation. Better weather and an earlier Easter enticed Americans to shell out for spring clothes in March, the fourth straight month of gains for retail sales. Target, Macy's, Gap and the parent of Victoria's Secret all beat Wall Street expectations.

The improvement was broad, spanning discounters, mass merchants, specialty stores and luxury retailers. The gains offer strong evidence that people are feeling more confident in the economic recovery and are more willing to spend.

Retailers had several factors on their side. The earlier holiday combined with comparisons to notoriously weak sales in March 2009 had analysts expecting solid improvements. But it's also clear that shoppers' mindset is changing.

"There was a lot of talk about the frugality of the American consumer and that the recession taught people to save more," said Sherif Mityas, a partner in the retail practice at management consultant A.T. Kearney. "But U.S. consumers have short-term memories."

Target Corp., Saks Inc. and Nordstrom Inc. said spring clothes sold well, particularly shoes and women's clothing. Overall, sales in stores open at least a year rose 9 percent in March, based on an index of 31 retailers compiled by the International Council of Shopping Centers.

The gains were partly driven by pent-up demand from shoppers tired of cutting back, said John Long, retail strategist at Kurt Salmon Associates.

"Moms are beginning to shop for themselves, after shopping in their closets the last two years," he said.

Analysts study the monthly sales reports because most economists agree a robust turnaround in consumer spending, which accounts for as much as 70 percent of economic activity, is essential for any long-term recovery.

"If you factor out the Easter shift, as well as easy comparisons, you're still seeing significant improvement," said Ken Perkins, president of RetailMetrics, a research firm.

It was the biggest yearly gain since March 1999, said ICSC chief economist Mike Niemira. He said Easter probably accounted for about half of the increase, and added that figures from this month will provide a more complete picture of consumer spending.

The monthly index excludes Wal-Mart Stores Inc., which stopped reporting monthly sales last year.

Jim Herget, shopping in West Chester, Ohio, with his granddaughter, added some DVDs to his cart at a local Walmart. His family didn't splurge much during the recession, but now they're spending a little more, he said.

"We're starting to buy things like the way it was before, getting back to normal," he said.

Several factors inflated the March sales figures. Easter came earlier than last year, so most sales for the holiday were rung up in March. And March 2009 — which last month's totals are compared with — was during the depths of the recession.

Among individual retailers, top performers included Target Corp., where sales rose more than 10 percent at stores open at least a year, partly because clothing was selling well. □

Concerns about Greece, US jobs hold back stocks



FILE - In this April 7, 2010 file photo, traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Stocks fell Thursday, April 8 on concerns about Greece's debt problems and unease about the U.S. job market.

By STEPHEN BERNARD
and TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK – Stocks traded in a tight range Thursday on concerns about Greece's debt problems and unease about the U.S. job market.

Major indexes in the U.S. at times managed modest gains but overseas markets sold off after speculation grew that Greece could default on its debt. Some Asian and European indexes slid by about 1 percent. Greece's debt troubles have been one of the few drags on stock markets around the world so far in 2010. Greece's borrowing costs rose to a record level Thursday. That put a further squeeze on the country's finances and signaled that a rescue plan from other European Union countries and the International Monetary Fund might not be able to prevent the country from defaulting on its debt.

A disappointing report on initial jobless claims also raised concerns. The Labor Department said initial claims for jobless benefits rose unexpectedly last week,

jumping 18,000 to a seasonally adjusted 460,000. Economists polled by Thomson Reuters had forecast a drop to 435,000.

Tim Speiss, chairman of Personal Wealth Advisors practice at Eisner LLP in New York, said the recent drop in stocks is a necessary break from a nearly unbroken advance in the past two months. He doesn't expect the drops will last because some investors will use the dips as opportunities to buy.

"I don't believe at all that we're going to have any kind of correction," he said. A correction refers to a drop of at least 10 percent from a peak. There have been five drops of 5 to 8 percent since major stock indexes hit 12-year lows 13 months ago but none have been more than 10 percent.

In midafternoon trading, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 29.70, or 0.3 percent, to 10,927.22. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 2.98, or 0.3 percent, to 1,185.42, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 3.36, or 0.1 percent, to 2,434.52.

Falling stocks narrowly outpaced those that rose on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 615.3 million shares, compared with 606.1 million traded at the same point Wednesday.

Stocks have retreated in recent days after the Dow flirted with 11,000 on Monday and Tuesday for the first time in 18 months. Sales reports from retailers showed consumers are beginning to return to stores, though the numbers haven't been good enough to offset the concerns over Greece's debt or the disappointing jobs report.

Target Corp. and TJX Cos., the owner of T.J. Maxx, Marshalls and other discount stores, increased their first-quarter earnings forecasts following strong sales in March. Macy's Inc. posted March sales that topped analysts' expectations. Consumer spending is a primary driver of the economy, so a sustained rise in purchases would show consumers are gaining more confidence in their finances.

The sales reports are especially important after a weaker-than-expected report Wednesday on consumer borrowing in February.

The Dow had its worst day since late February on Wednesday, falling 72 points. Losses accelerated late in the day after the Federal Reserve said consumer borrowing fell unexpectedly in February.

The retreat came after major indexes had been on a steady climb. The S&P 500 hit an 18-month high on Tuesday and had risen 12.6 percent in the past two months.

Bond prices were little changed. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note rose to 3.88 percent from 3.87 percent late Wednesday. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Woods back, better than ever to start Masters

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Georgia (AP) — Tiger Woods shot a 4-under 68 — his best first round ever at Augusta National — to leave him only two shots behind Fred Couples after an extraordinary opening day at the Masters on Thursday.

Woods played like the last five months never happened. Even more surprising, he felt that way, too.

Standing on the first tee, looking down a fairway lined with thousands of spectators curious to see how he would respond to a sex scandal that shocked the world, Woods didn't flinch.

"It felt normal," he said. "Try to hit a little fade off the first tee, try to take something off of it and make sure I got it in play."

That was about it. From



Tiger Woods tips his cap on the 18th hole after finishing his first round of the Masters golf tournament in Augusta, Ga., Thursday, April 8, 2010.

Associated Press

there, I just went about my business."

Woods twirled his club after a good drive, slammed it after a few bad ones. He pumped his fist after making the first of two eagles and sunk to his knees when he missed a birdie putt on the 16th that slowed his climb up the leaderboard.

And just like always, he complained about not making enough putts.

"Otherwise, it could have been a very special round," Woods said.

Yet it was special in so many ways.

The 50-year-old Couples, who played a practice round with Woods on Monday, sauntered along in tennis shoes and no socks and shot a 6-under 66, his best score ever at the Masters.

Continued on Page 15

Whoa Nelly!!!



Golden State Warriors coach Don Nelson celebrates with his team after breaking the record for career coaching victories after the Warriors beat the Minnesota Timberwolves 116-107 in an NBA basketball game Wednesday, April 7, 2010, in Minneapolis. It was Nelson's 1,333rd win, moving him past Lenny Wilkens.

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — The Denver Nuggets charged back from a 13-point deficit to beat the Oklahoma City Thunder 98-94 on Wednesday, picking up a crucial road win in their NBA playoff chase.

Chauncey Billups scored 31 points and Carmelo Anthony added 24 as Denver held

Oklahoma City without a basket for the final 9 minutes while finishing the game on a 22-5 run.

The Nuggets are chasing the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference playoffs.

Thunder's Kevin Durant scored 33 points but missed a shot that would've tied the

NBA Roundup

Nuggets fight back to beat Thunder in key game

score in the final 10 seconds. Anthony followed that with two free throws to clinch it with 6.8 seconds left.

In Phoenix, the hosts stayed tied for second in the Western Conference by dominating San Antonio.

Amare Stoudemire scored 29 points and Jason Richardson added 20 in Phoenix's 11th victory in 12 games.

Roger Mason led six Spurs in double figures with 18 points. San Antonio lost its first game in five to fall into a three-way tie for the West's final three playoff spots.

In Houston, Aaron Brooks and Kevin Martin scored 28 points apiece as Houston defeated Utah.

Brooks hit five 3-pointers and has 197 this season, a new

franchise record.

Rick Adelman became the 11th coach to reach 900 career victories.

Utah was led by Carlos Boozer's 18 points and 11 rebounds. The Jazz slipped to fifth in the West.

In Dallas, Caron Butler scored 23 points and Dirk Nowitzki added 22 points and nine rebounds as Dallas crushed Memphis.

The Mavericks opened a three-game lead atop the Southwest Division and moved into a three-way tie for second place in the West.

Rudy Gay scored 23 points for Memphis, which lost its ninth in a row away at Dallas.

In Toronto, Boston capitalized on another injury to a Toronto player.

Following Chris Bosh's facial fracture the previous day, the Raptors lost Hedo Turkoglu in the first quarter Wednesday in a clash of heads that left the Turk with a cut nose and he was taken to hospital for a scan.

In other NBA games it was, Indiana 113, New York 105; Boston 115, Toronto 104; Orlando 121, Washington 94; Detroit 90, Atlanta 88; Miami 99, Philadelphia 95; Houston 113, Utah 96; Milwaukee 108, New Jersey 89; Golden State 116, Minnesota 107; Charlotte 104, New Orleans 103; Denver 98, Oklahoma City 94; Dallas 110, Memphis 84; Portland 93, L.A. Clippers 85; and Phoenix 112, San Antonio 101.

NHL Roundup

Coyotes clinch home advantage in playoffs

GLENDAL, Arizona (AP) — The Phoenix Coyotes clinched the No.4 seed in the Western Conference and home advantage in the first round of the NHL playoffs by beating the Nashville Predators 5-2 on Wednesday.

Shane Doan ended a 23-game goal drought and Wojtek Wolski scored his career-high 23rd goal for Phoenix. Taylor Pyatt, Lauri Korpikoski and Petteri Nokelainen also scored in the Coyotes' seventh straight home victory. Shea Weber scored 12 seconds into the game, and Steve Sullivan added a goal for Nashville in its first game since clinching its fifth playoff berth in six seasons.

Blackhawks 6, Blues 5

In Chicago, the hosts scored four goals in just over three minutes of the first period and held on to edge St. Louis.

Duncan Keith, Ben Eager, Bryan Bickell and Kris Versteeg netted in the early scoring burst as Chicago notched a fifth straight victory.

Andrew Ladd and Jordan Hendry also scored to help Chicago reach a franchise-record 109 points and tie San Jose for first place in the Western Conference.

Versteeg added three assists to

set a career high for points in a game and become the first Blackhawks player to have a four-point game this season. David Perron, Roman Polak, Brad Winchester, T.J. Oshie and Brad Boyes scored for the Blues, who nearly overcame a 6-1 deficit.

Red Wings 4, Blue Jackets 3

In Detroit, Tomas Holmstrom scored twice and Dan Cleary also netted in a 1:16 span of the third period as Detroit fought back to down Columbus.

Niklas Kronwall added a goal and an assist, and Jimmy Howard made 21 saves for Detroit.

Mike Blunden had a goal and an assist, while R.J. Umberger and Sammy Pahlsson also scored for Columbus.

Rangers 5, Maple Leafs 1

In New York, the hosts gave their tenuous playoff hopes a boost by beating Toronto.

Erik Christensen gave New York the lead 21 seconds in, then combined with Vinny Prospal for goals 30 seconds apart that quickly put away the game.

The Rangers, ninth in the Eastern Conference, trail Boston by a point, No. 7 Philadelphia by two points, and No. 6 Montreal by three.

Olli Jokinen and Aaron Voros also scored for New York.

Dion Phaneuf netted for the Leafs.

Oilers 5, Avalanche 4, OT

In Edmonton, Alberta, Ryan Whitney scored in overtime to give Edmonton a victory over playoff-bound Colorado.

Matt Duchene, Ryan O'Reilly and Marek Svatos scored inside nine minute to give the Avalanche a 3-0 lead, but the Oilers rallied to take the lead. Shawn Horcoff and Dustin Penner had first-period goals, Mike Comrie tied it on a power play in the second, and Andrew Cogliano made it 4-3



Phoenix Coyotes' Lauri Korpikoski (29), of Finland, celebrates his goal against the Nashville Predators with teammates Daniel Winnik (34) and Petteri Nokelainen (71), of Finland, in the first period of an NHL hockey game Wednesday, April 7, 2010, in Glendale, Ariz.

Associated Press

at 6:08 of the third.

Colorado's Matt Hendricks scored the third period goal that sent the game to overtime.

In other NHL matches it

was: N.Y. Rangers 5, Toronto 1; Detroit 4, Columbus 3; Chicago 6, St. Louis 5; Edmonton 5, Colorado 4, OT; and Phoenix 5, Nashville 2. □

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Oakland Athletics' Kevin Kouzmanoff (5) slides to score the game-winning run behind Seattle Mariners catcher Adam Moore (10) during the ninth inning of a baseball game Wednesday, April 7, 2010, in Oakland, Calif. Kouzmanoff scored on a double by Kurt Suzuki.

Associated Press

OAKLAND, California (AP) — the ninth inning to lift the — Kurt Suzuki hit a walkoff Oakland Athletics to a 6-5 RBI double with one out in win over the Seattle Mariners

AL Roundup

Suzuki hits winner as A's down Mariners

in Wednesday's American League action.

Suzuki's seventh career walkoff hit provided a happy ending to a night that began with the return of Justin Duchscherer to the mound. Duchscherer missed all of last season while recovering from elbow surgery and dealing with clinical depression. He pitched into the sixth in his first appearance in nearly 20 months.

With Kevin Kouzmanoff on first with one out in the ninth, Suzuki hit a drive to the wall in left field off Mark Lowe. Milton Bradley reached up to try to make the catch, but the ball appeared to bounce off his glove and Kouzmanoff raced around to score.

Twins 4, Angels 2

In Anaheim, California, Carl Pavano pitched seven sharp

innings in his season debut to steer Minnesota past Los Angeles.

Pavano allowed just one run, striking out six without a walk to take the win.

Justin Morneau and J.J. Hardy each homered for the second straight game for the Twins.

Yankees 3, Red Sox 1, 10th inning

In Boston, Curtis Granderson led off the 10th inning with a tiebreaking homer to lift New York over Boston.

Granderson hit an 0-and-1 pitch into the right-field seats against Boston pitcher Jonathan Papelbon for his second homer in three games with his new team.

Then, after three walks, Mark Teixeira drove in the final run on a groundout as the Red Sox wasted an outstanding performance by John Lackey,

who allowed only three hits in six innings in his first appearance since signing an \$82.5 million, five-year contract.

In Kansas City, Missouri, Alberto Callaspo hit a tying homer to lead off the bottom of the 11th and pinch runner Willie Bloomquist scored on an error to give Kansas City victory over Detroit.

After Callaspo's shot off Tigers pitcher Jose Valverde, Billy Butler singled and Bloomquist ran for him. He stopped at third on Rick Ankiel's double to right-center, but scampered home when Tigers rookie second baseman Scott Sizemore dropped the relay throw.

In St. Petersburg, Florida, Evan Longoria homered and drove in three runs to lead Tampa Bay over Baltimore.

Longoria hit a two-out, two-run double in the fifth to give the Rays a 3-2 lead and added a solo homer in the eighth.

Rays starter Matt Garza allowed two runs over eight innings, striking out nine.

In Chicago, Cleveland rallied to post their first win under manager Manny Acta.

The Indians scored three runs in the fourth to tie the game, then went ahead in the seventh when Matt LaPorta hit a double that scored Shin-Soo Choo.

In other AL games it was, Tampa Bay 4, Baltimore 3; N.Y. Yankees 3, Boston 1, 10 innings; Toronto 7, Texas 4; Cleveland 5, Chicago White Sox 3; Kansas City 3, Detroit 2, 11 innings; Minnesota 4, L.A. Angels 2; and Oakland 6, Seattle 5. □

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WOODS BACK*Continued from Page 12*

"I never really thought about what I was shooting," said Couples, who already has won three times this year on the 50-and-older Champions Tour. "It was a fun day for me. I still think I can play, and if I putt well I've got to be some kind of factor in my mind."

Tom Watson, at 60 the oldest player in this Masters, picked up from his amazing performance at last summer's British Open with a bogey-free 67 that left him level with Lee Westwood, Phil Mickelson, PGA champion Y.E. Yang and K.J. Choi.

Tom Watson, at 60 the oldest player in this Masters, picked up from his amazing performance at last year's British Open with a bogey-free round of 67 that left him tied with Lee Westwood, Phil Mickelson, PGA champion Y.E. Yang and K.J. Choi.

"My goals were to play better than I've played in the last five or six years, and I achieved that — for the first round," Watson said. "I'm playing pretty well. I've said I have

to play better than 90 percent to be successful on this golf course."

Still, this day was always going to be about Woods.

He had not hit a competitive shot in 144 days, since winning the Australian Masters on Nov. 15 for his 82nd victory around the world. A four-time Masters champion, he has never come to Augusta National with so much uncertainty — about his game, and mostly how fans would respond to a player whose impeccable image had been shattered by tawdry tabloid tales of sex.

The patrons were on their best behavior, as expected at the most polite tournament in golf. Augusta National can't control the perimeter of the course, however, and a couple of planes toted banners that poked fun at Woods — one for his pledge to get back to Buddhism ("Bootyism," the banner said), another mocking claims he needed therapy as a sex addict.

On the ground, the gallery was mostly positive, with a few exceptions.

"He doesn't have the right



Ben Crenshaw reacts to his tee shot on the fourth hole during the first round of the Masters golf tournament in Augusta, Ga., Thursday, April 8, 2010.

Associated Press

character and integrity to represent golf," Larry Isenhour said. "That's why I came out early this morning to applaud Jack Nicklaus."

Nicklaus, the six-time Masters champion, joined Arnold Palmer as an honorary starter. The two old rivals hit the ceremonial tee shots to open the Masters, and chairman Billy Payne said, "The 2010 Masters is now officially begun. Have fun."

Clouds moved in quickly and kept the sun from baking



Sergio Garcia, left, of Spain watches as Fred Couples tips his cap on the 18th green after their first round of the Masters golf tournament in Augusta, Ga., Thursday, April 8, 2010.

Associated Press

out the greens, and some of the hole locations allowed for birdies. The low scores weren't a surprise, only the names next to them.

Watson had two birdies in three holes to put his name on the leaderboard and bring back memories of his magical run at Turnberry last summer when he missed an eight-foot putt on last hole of regulation and then lost in a playoff at the British Open. He never

went away this time, never made a bogey and wound up matching his best score ever at Augusta.

"I don't know if you can put an age on how anybody is playing, but he's playing like one of the best players in the world right now," said Steve Marino, who played with Watson, as he did in the third round at the British.

Mickelson came to the Masters without having finished in the top five this year, but he looked as comfortable as ever, particularly on the back nine with an eagle-birdie-birdie stretch that put him atop the leaderboard at 67.

Westwood, Europe's top player, had only broken 70 twice in his Masters career until running off seven birdies for a 67.

Throughout the morning, however, anticipation was building toward Woods' return.

A single row of fans stood behind the ropes along the first fairway a half-hour before Woods teed off. When he approached the green, the crowd stood 10-deep in spots, a gallery that included European Tour chief George O'Grady and about 15 people from Woods' circle — his mother, friends, employees, Nike chairman Phil Knight and other sponsors.

Given all that transpired over the last five months — revelations of his womanizing, the loss of sponsors and a shattered reputation — it figured to be as nervous as Woods has been over an opening tee shot since his first as a pro. □

San Diego seeks pre-America's Cup regatta

BERNIE WILSON

AP Sports Writer

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Port of San Diego officials want to host a Louis Vuitton Trophy regatta that could be part of the buildup to the next America's Cup.

Port commissioners plan to contact the World Sailing Teams Association and Louis Vuitton about starting negotiations as soon as possible, with the hope of hosting a regatta next March.

If the sides can agree to terms, a San Diego regatta would follow racing scheduled for La Maddalena, Italy, in May, Dubai in November and Hong Kong in January. Two more regattas could be held in 2011, on the Black Sea in Russia and in Greece.

A Louis Vuitton Trophy regatta was held recently in Auckland, New Zealand, with former America's Cup champion Team New Zealand beating Italy's Mascalzone, the new Challenger of Record, in the final.

San Diego hosted the America's Cup in 1988, 1992 and 1995.

BMW Oracle Racing, the syndicate owned by American software tycoon Larry Ellison, won the America's Cup for San Francisco's Golden Gate Yacht Club with a two-race sweep of Alinghi of Switzerland in Valencia, Spain, in February.

GGYC and BMW Oracle Racing officials have been consulting with other teams about the venue, timing, format and class of boat for the next America's Cup. They expect to have specifics later this year.

"I think we have all the right ingredients for the Louis Vuitton Trophy to be held in San Diego," said Troy Sears, a member of the host committee who met with Louis Vuitton officials in Auckland. "We would love to go to San Diego," said Bruno Trouble, a former skipper who is an official with Louis Vuitton. "They are very keen to have our event but I don't know more at the moment."

Trouble said that ideally, the Louis Vuitton Trophy would morph



Emirates Team New Zealand, left, leads Italy's Mascalzone Latino Audi Team during the second race of the final of the Louis Vuitton Trophy, Auckland, New Zealand, Sunday, March 21, 2010. Team New Zealand beat Italy's Mascalzone Latino by 56 seconds Sunday to clinch a 2-0 win in the best-of-three final of the Louis Vuitton Trophy sailing regatta for America's Cup teams.

Associated Press

into the Louis Vuitton Cup, which for years was the elimination series that decided which challenger would face the defender in the America's Cup match.

"Until we know where it is, when it is, what boat, it's difficult to start negotiating," Trouble said. "For sure we will enter into negotiations soon and the WSTA might play a role. But again, nothing has been secured yet."

Unlike the bitter court fight between BMW Oracle Racing and Alinghi that preceded the 33rd America's Cup, Trouble said early discussions about the future of the 34th America's Cup have been positive. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

NL Roundup

Giants extend strong start, beat Astros 10-4



San Francisco Giants' Edgar Renteria (16) hits an RBI-single to center field in the seventh inning as Houston Astros catcher J.R. Towles, left, watches during a baseball game in Houston on Wednesday, April 7, 2010.

Associated Press

Spanish qualifier beats Clijsters in Andalusia

MARBELLA, Spain (AP) — Kim Clijsters lost to 258th-ranked Beatriz Garcia Vidagany of Spain 7-5, 4-6, 6-4 in the second round of the Andalusia Open on Thursday. Clijsters, fresh off her second title win of the year at Miami, was broken nine times in a seesaw match in which both players struggled on serve. Clijsters agreed during the Miami tournament to accept a wild card and play her first clay-court tournament in three years in preparation for the French Open next month. Garcia Vidagany came through qualifying to make her first main draw appearance on the WTA Tour. The third-seeded Clijsters was broken in the 11th game

in losing the first set to Garcia Vidagany. In the second, Clijsters used one of her eight break points in the set to even it. Garcia Vidagany broke the Belgian to get ahead 2-1 in the final frame and went on to secure easily her biggest win and a spot in the quarterfinals. Garcia Vidagany will play Sara Errani next after the Italian player knocked off seventh-seeded Anabel Medina Garrigues 6-1, 7-6 (1). Top-seeded Victoria Azarenka of Belarus advanced with a 6-2, 6-4 win over wild card Estrella Cabeza Candela of Spain, while second-seeded Flavia Pennetta of Italy dispatched qualifier Laura Pous Tio of Spain 6-2, 6-2.

HOUSTON (AP) — The San Francisco Giants completed a season-opening three-game sweep of the National League series against Houston, beating the Astros 10-4 on Wednesday. Edgar Renteria tied a career high with five hits for the Giants, who have started a season 3-0 for the first time in seven years. Houston last started 0-3 in 2007. It was 4-4 before San Francisco's Juan Uribe doubled in the eighth inning and scored the go-ahead run when Houston pitcher Sammy Gervacio threw away a bunt. The Giants added another run in the inning, then scored four times in the ninth. **Brewers 5, Rockies 4** In Milwaukee, Jim Edmonds' leadoff single set up a two-run rally in the sixth inning that put Milwaukee ahead to stay against Colorado. Edmonds, a 39-year-old former All-Star who spent last season out of baseball, made his second start for Milwaukee. He went 2 for 4 with a double and scored twice. Brewers closer Trevor Hoffman earned his 593rd career save. **Diamondbacks 5, Padres 3** In Phoenix, Kelly Johnson hit two of Arizona's four homers, helping the Diamondbacks rally for a win over San Diego. Johnson connected on the second pitch of the game and added a tying two-run drive in the fifth. Chris Young's homer put Arizona up 4-3 and Justin Upton also went long. Scott Hairston hit a three-run homer in the second for San Diego. **Phillies 8, Nationals 4** In Washington, Ryan Howard hit a two-run homer and an RBI double in Philadelphia's win over Washington. Philadelphia starter Cole Hamels labored through five innings to take the win, and hit an RBI single in the fourth that gave the two-time reigning NL champions a 3-2 lead. Washington tied it before Howard's two-run drive to right-center in the fifth. **Cardinals 6, Reds 3** In Cincinnati, Albert Pujols hit a tiebreaking single in the seventh inning as St. Louis downed Cincinnati. Matt Holliday followed with a two-run double for the Cardinals. St. Louis starter Adam Wainwright gave up only three hits in seven innings, including Orlando Cabrera's two-run homer in the bottom of the sixth that tied it at 2-2. In Atlanta, Chipper Jones hit



Kim Clijsters, of Belgium, returns the ball the ball to Venus Williams, of the United States, during the women's singles championship match at the Sony Ericsson Open tennis tournament in Key Biscayne, Fla., Saturday, April 3, 2010. *Associates Press* Also, qualifier Simona Halep beat Sorana Cirstea 6-4, 7-6 (4) in an all-Romanian matchup while eighth-seeded Carla Suarez Navarro of Spain hung on to defeat Polona Hercog of Slovenia 6-4, 7-6 (2) in a match featuring 11 break points. □

a go-ahead, two-run homer in the eighth inning and Atlanta held on to edge Chicago. After 15 consecutive outs for Braves' batters, Martin Prado hit a one-out double before Jones connected for his first homer of the season. Atlanta reliever Peter Moylan worked around a hit and a walk during a scoreless eighth to take the win. **Pirates 4, Dodgers 3, 10 innings** In Pittsburgh, Ronny Cedeno singled over a drawn-in infield with the bases loaded and one out in the 10th inning, lifting Pittsburgh over Los Angeles. Prior to Cedeno's hit, the Pirates hadn't scored since Garrett Jones' three-run homer in the first inning. In the bottom of the 10th, Dodgers reliever Ramon Ortiz walked the bases full, and Cedeno finished off a nine-pitch at-bat with a line-drive single to left. Marlins 7, Mets 6, 10 innings In New York, Wes Helms slid home headfirst to barely beat an attempted tag at the plate, giving Florida a tight win over New York. Helms dashed for home on Ronny Paulino's single, and his hand swiped the plate just ahead of a sweeping attempted tag by Mets catcher Rod Barajas. Florida pitcher Leo Nunez walked in a run and balked in the tying score over 1 1-3 innings, but came away with the win in the 4 hour, 12 minute game. **In other NL games it was, Milwaukee 5, Colorado 4; San Francisco 10, Houston 4; Pittsburgh 4, L.A. Dodgers 3, 10 innings; Philadelphia 8, Washington 4; Atlanta 3, Chicago Cubs 2; Florida 7, N.Y. Mets 6, 10 innings; St. Louis 6, Cincinnati 3; and Arizona 5, San Diego 3.** □

Minister Otmar Oduber reaches consensus with cab drivers

Zero tolerance for infractions in public transportation

Increase of number of passengers in taxis being considered

ORANJESTAD—Strict rules and supervision, improved appearance, and hospitable attitude will guide the taxi industry in Aruba.

At least that is the conviction of the Minister of Tourism and Transport Otmar Oduber, who is motivated by the support he received from all seven taxi associations this week.

Minister Oduber met with representatives of the association to deliberate on a number of issues that could improve the functioning of the industry and improve the quality of service toward clients, particularly tourists.

The meeting was crucial in the sense that it was important to find a common ground, not only between the Government and the cab drivers, but also for the seven organizations to reach a consensus amongst each other, in order to move forward. The Minister said his task and that of the responsible entity, namely Department of Public Transportation, DOPV is to set a clear policy. And this policy entails an improved public transportation management and operation.

An important element is compliance with the rules and regulation of public transportation.

Continued on Next Page



6th edition of Wente Vineyards/Papiamento Restaurant Golf Tournament

Eric and Arel Wente arrive on Aruba



ORANJESTAD - Fifth-generation Eric Wente of Wente Vineyards in California arrived in the company of his wife Arel on Aruba yesterday. The two are here for the sixth

annual Wente Vineyards/Papiamento Restaurant Golf Tournament, which is held at the Tierra del Sol Golf Course this coming Saturday, April 10. Govert van der Hout of the Arion Wine Company and representative of Wente Wines on Aruba, was at the airport to welcome his two friends.

The Wente Vineyards/Papiamento Restaurant Golf Tournament is a charity event. Last year's proceeds went to the organization which provides a daily breakfast to schoolchildren who go to school on an empty stomach. This year's chosen charity is the Fundación Autismo Aruba (FAA), the foundation which helps parents cope with the difficulties of raising a child with autism.

Sponsors who will place their banners on one of the eighteen holes include AMC Unicon, A.S.A.P., Arubabank, BSL Laundry, Deloitte, Dufry,

Elmar, FAST delivery, Flora market, FUJI water, Hugo Boss, Ling & Sons, Nagico Insurance, Garage Cordia, VNO and Willy's Pool. There is lots of excitement among the players of this popular golf event, as it starts off with a great welcome reception at Papiamento Restaurant on Friday and a well-catered lunch complete with a bottle of Wente wine for the players on Saturday. The awards ceremony is preceded by a cocktail party and a terrific soup buffet at Tierra del Sol Golf Course.



Photo shows Eric Wente and his wife Arel receiving a heartfelt welcome from Govert van der Hout of the Arion Wine Company. □



Minister Otmar Oduber reaches consensus with cab drivers



Continued from Page B1

The Minister said the associations agreed with him that a zero tolerance policy has to be in place, to ensure everyone adheres to the conditions of the permits, whether it is a taxi, tour operator, car rental or bus permit. Oduber pointed out that already DOPV called in some permits because the owners were not complying

with the rules, and emphasized this control will continue and even intensified. "We will not tolerate any violations." Another important factor is that has to contribute to the quality of service to clients is the physical appearance of cab drivers. In Aruba, a cabdriver is his own boss. There is no dress code nor is a minimum demand for what kind of vehicle used as a cab.



The Aruba Tourism Authority based on a survey indicated that cabs in Aruba are of a good quality and that the standard is relatively high. Yet, there are voices coming up asking for a dress code or uniform-type attire, in order to ensure a good image. Minister Oduber said the topic was also discussed with the representatives of the associations, who agreed with the necessity for cab drivers to portray a professional image. Oduber added that in previous meetings with among other taxi drivers, all stakeholders agreed that it is imperative to improve the quality of the tourism product of Aruba, and taxi service plays a major role overall. The associations agreed to have additional conditions tied to their permits, pertaining to the appearance of drivers, the quality and cleanliness of the cabs, as well as the service rendered



to tourists. It was also agreed that the taxi meters will not be installed even though it is mentioned in the current law. According to Minister Oduber, the system will not work in the current traffic conditions, as it would drastically increase the fare. This would be detrimental for the taxi industry in Aruba. A key element in the discussion with the Minister was the amount of passengers allowed in a cab. The law was modified a few years ago, reducing the number of people in a taxi from seven to five, including the driver. Oduber said that as a Parliament member he never understood this decision and now as a Minister he still doesn't. In fact, Minister Oduber said that the new law had a negative impact on taxis. Families with more than two children would rather rent cars or use public transportation, since taking two taxis each time they go out would be too expensive. The associations requested a renewed decision

on the matter and now will have to present a common position, which will then be taken in consideration for an eventual reversal of the law. There are other issues that still need to be addressed with the taxi industry, and some include modification in the traffic system to facilitate work and service. The Minister did not elaborate on this matter as it is still under discussion with the Minister of Justice on changes in the traffic laws, and with the Minister of Infrastructure, who has to approve the physical changes in the infrastructure here. "I am very grateful for the posture of cooperation taken by representatives of the taxi associations. Taxi drivers do play a major role in the quality of Aruba as a tourist destination. They are the first and last persons most tourists meet on their vacation here, thus their participation in product improvement is determining," Minister Otmar Oduber concluded. □



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Store manager Lina Maria Tromp Ibarra reports the directors opened three outlets in just one day, one on Palm Beach, and two in town. □



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Busy programme for Antillean delegation

THE HAGUE--A busy programme awaits the delegations of the Antillean Parliament, Curaçao and St. Maarten in The Hague this and next week. Delegations arrived in the Netherlands on Wednesday for the handling of the Kingdom Consensus Laws.

The delegation, comprising of nine representatives of the Antillean Parliament from the different islands, Commissioners Zita Jesus-Leito of Curaçao and William Marlin and a number of advisors, arrived in the Netherlands on Wednesday for a week and a half of meetings.

A delegation from Curaçao's Island Council also travelled to the Netherlands in connection with the historic handling of the Kingdom laws. The delegation of Aruba's Parliament has also arrived in the Netherlands. Aruba had a separate meeting with the Second Chamber's Permanent Committee of Antillean and Aruban Affairs NAAZ on Thursday.

On the agenda are ten Kingdom Consensus Laws: Joint Court

of Justice, Police and Public Prosecutor's Offices Curaçao, St. Maarten and the BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, Council for the Maintenance of Law and Order, Financial Supervision Curaçao and St. Maarten, Governor for Curaçao and St. Maarten, Adapting the Kingdom Laws to establish the new countries, Amending the Kingdom Charter in relation to the dismantling of the Netherlands Antilles, and Establishing the sea border between Curaçao and Bonaire and between St. Maarten and Saba. The first meeting takes place today, Thursday when the delegations have a session with Antillean Minister Plenipotentiary in The Hague Marcel van der Plank at Hotel Mercure, The Hague to come to an agreement on the work method, coordination and logistics. Recent copies of documents will be distributed. The first day of the legislation consultation (wetgevingsoverleg) is on Friday, from 11:00am to 7:00pm, with the first term of the Second Chamber. On

Saturday, the delegations will work on preparing the answers posed by the Second Chamber.

On Sunday, the delegations will feed back with civil servants of the Ministries of Home Affairs and Kingdom relations BZK and Justice.

The legislation consultation continues on Monday, from 10:00am to 6:00pm, when caretaker Minister of Justice Ernst Hirsch Ballin and State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten, on behalf of Dutch Government, provide answers to questions posed during Friday's meeting.

After this, the second Chamber will have its second term, followed by the answers by Minister Hirsch Ballin and State Secretary Bijleveld-Schouten. The Second Chamber will submit several

amendments to the proposed Kingdom laws during these two meetings.

The Kingdom Council of Ministers meets on Tuesday to take a formal position on the amendments. Ministers Plenipotentiary Van der Plank of the Antilles and Edwin Abath of Aruba will represent the islands at this meeting, but Antillean Prime Minister Emily de Jongh-Elhage is also expected to be present.

The Kingdom Council of Ministers meeting is crucial and its success very much depends on whether parties can reach a consensus on the amendments. If that fails, chances are great that the constitutional reform process will be impeded. Minister Plenipotentiary Van der Plank will inform the delegations of the outcome of the meeting immediately after.

In the evening, there will be a dinner offered by Bijleveld-Schouten.

On Wednesday, the plenary session in the Second Chamber starts with a first term of Parliament, followed by the answers by the cabinet. After that comes the second term, again followed by answers by the cabinet.

Special delegates of the Antillean Parliament will have the right to speak at these meetings. For this occasion, the plenary hall of the Second Chamber will be divided in three sections: one section for the Second Chamber, one for the Antillean Parliament and one for the Aruban Parliament.

On Thursday, the second Chamber will vote on the laws, after which a press conference will be held. □

Forecasters see increased hurricane threat for 2010

MIAMI--The 2010 Atlantic hurricane season will produce an above-average eight hurricanes, four of them major, posing a heightened threat to the U.S. coastline, the Colorado State University hurricane forecasting team predicted on Wednesday.

In its second forecast in four months for the 2010 season, the leading storm research team founded by hurricane forecast pioneer William Gray said the six-month season, June 1 to November 30, would likely see 15 named tropical storms.

The team forecast a 69 per cent chance of at least one major hurricane making landfall on the U.S. coastline in 2010, compared with a long-term average probability of 52 per cent. Major hurricanes pack powerful sustained winds of at least 111 miles per hour (178 km per hour).

"While patterns may change before the start of the hurricane season, we believe current conditions warrant concern for an above-average season," Gray said in a statement.

An average Atlantic season has about 10 tropical storms, of which six become hurricanes.

The Colorado State University team also predicted a 58 percent chance of a major hurricane tracking into the Caribbean, where Haiti is vulnerable after a devastating January 12 earthquake that left more than a million people homeless.

The earlier forecast in December by Gray's team had already predicted an "above-average" season producing 11 to 16 tropical storms, including six to eight hurricanes. It had said

three to five of the year's storms would become "major" hurricanes of Category 3 or higher on the Saffir-Simpson intensity scale.

Another forecaster, AccuWeather.com, last month also forecast a potentially "extreme" hurricane season this year, with "above-normal threats" to the U.S. coastline.

AccuWeather said five hurricanes, two or three of them major, were expected to strike the U.S. coast, forming out of an expected 16 to 18 tropical storms, almost all of them in the western Atlantic or Gulf of Mexico.

The 2009 season ended November 30 had only nine storms, including three hurricanes, and was the quietest since 1997 due in part to El Nino, the eastern Pacific warm water phenomenon that tends to suppress Atlantic hurricanes. The university team originally expected the 2009 season to produce 14 tropical cyclones, of which seven would become hurricanes.

But Phil Klotzbach, lead forecaster with the Colorado State team, whose research is followed closely by energy and commodity markets, said El Nino was expected to dissipate fully by the start of this year's storm season.

"The dissipating El Nino, along with the expected anomalously warm Atlantic ocean sea surface temperatures, will lead to favourable dynamic and thermodynamic conditions for hurricane formation and intensification," said Klotzbach.

The Colorado State University team has repeatedly cautioned that extended-range forecasts for hurricane activity are imprecise and can often miss the mark. □



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First Quarter 2010 Earnings Release

Royal Bank of Canada Reports First Quarter 2010 Results

Royal Bank of Canada has reported net income of \$1,497 million for the first quarter ended January 31, 2010, up \$387 million or 35% from last year and up \$260 million or 21% from last quarter. This quarter we had strong results across most of our businesses and lower provision for credit losses (PCL). Net income increased from the prior year reflecting the general improvement in market and economic conditions.

"We generated net income of \$1.5 billion and a return on equity of 17.5% while maintaining a strong capital position. This speaks to the earnings power of this organization, the strength of our businesses and our ability to manage costs and capital effectively," said Gordon M. Nixon, RBC President and CEO.

"Our longstanding strategy and diversified business model continues to serve us well as we extend our leadership position in Canada and build on our global platform. We continue to see signs of improvement in market and economic conditions and we are taking advantage of opportunities," Nixon said.

First quarter 2010 compared to first quarter 2009

- Net income of \$1,497 million (up 35% from \$1,110 million)
- Diluted earnings per share (EPS) of \$1.00 (up \$.22 from \$.78)
- Return on common equity (ROE) of 17.5% (up 300 basis points (bps) from 14.5%)
- Tier 1 capital ratio of 12.7%

First quarter 2010 compared to fourth quarter 2009

- Net income of \$1,497 million (up 21% from \$1,237 million)
- Diluted EPS of \$1.00 (up \$.18 from \$.82)
- ROE of 17.5% (up 280 bps from 14.7%)

Canadian Banking net income was \$777 million, up \$81 million or 12% from last year, reflecting continued strong volume growth across most businesses and our ongoing focus on cost management, partially offset by higher PCL. Prior year earnings included a favorable adjustment of \$52 million (\$32 million after-tax) related to our credit card customer loyalty reward program liability. Compared to

last quarter, net income was up \$60 million or 8%, reflecting volume growth across most businesses and our ongoing focus on cost management.

"Our results in Canadian Banking reflect strong volume growth and market share gains across most products. Solid revenue growth coupled with our ongoing focus on cost management drove an efficiency ratio of 45.7%, an improvement of 140 basis points over last quarter," Nixon said.

Wealth Management net income was \$219 million, up \$91 million over last year due to higher average fee-based client assets and transaction volumes, cumulative accounting adjustments of \$39 million (\$34 million after-tax), and a favorable income tax adjustment of \$30 million. These factors were partially offset by spread compression.

Compared to last quarter, earnings were up \$58 million primarily due to the cumulative accounting adjustments and the favorable income tax adjustment noted above, partially offset by lower transaction volumes.

"Our Wealth Management businesses benefited from improved market conditions over last year, resulting in higher average fee-based client assets and a return of investor confidence. We continue to leverage our global capabilities to differentiate our product and service offerings to both individual and institutional clients," Nixon said.

Insurance net income was \$118 million, up \$6 million or 5% from a year ago, reflecting solid business growth, largely in our European life business, investment losses in the prior year, and the favorable impact of a new U.K. annuity reinsurance arrangement in the current quarter. Compared to last quarter, net income was up \$14 million or 13%, reflecting a lower level of unfavorable actuarial adjustments and investment losses in the prior quarter.

"Insurance continued to exhibit strong business growth across most products and complements our retail product offering," Nixon said. International Banking net loss of \$57 million was lower than the net loss of \$100 million a year ago and

the net loss of \$125 million last quarter. The improvement from last year is primarily due to lower PCL, which included provisions related to certain available-for-sale (AFS) securities reclassified to loans recorded in the prior year, and our ongoing focus on cost management. Compared to last quarter, the improvement reflects the provision recorded in the prior quarter related to the restructuring of certain Caribbean banking mutual funds which was partially reversed in the current quarter, lower PCL and our ongoing focus on cost management.

"We continue to see signs of improvement in our U.S. banking loan portfolio and we are working hard to restructure the business to improve client service and achieve greater operational efficiency," Nixon said.

Capital Markets net income was \$571 million, up \$346 million from a year ago, as last year included significant market environment-related losses. We also had lower PCL and improved results across most of our investment banking businesses, partially offset by lower trading results. Compared to last quarter, net income was up \$10 million largely reflecting lower PCL and the release of the remaining Enron Corp.-related litigation provision of \$53 million (\$29 million after-tax). These factors were partially offset by higher variable compensation, as last quarter included an annual adjustment which lowered the expense in the fourth quarter.

"Once again, we benefited from the strength and diversity of our Capital Markets businesses. Compared to last quarter, we had stronger investment banking activity driven by improved equity and credit market conditions and while we experienced moderating trading revenue in our fixed income and money markets businesses, this was partially offset by higher trading in equities," Nixon said. Corporate Support net loss of \$131 million mainly reflected income tax adjustments which were largely offset by favorable tax adjustments in other segments. The net loss also included the unfavorable impact of hedge accounting

on discontinued hedges and unfavorable cumulative accounting adjustments of \$47 million (\$33 million after-tax), related to securitization activity. These factors were partially offset by gains on our AFS portfolios.

Credit Quality – Total PCL of \$493 million decreased \$293 million from a year ago and \$390 million from last quarter. There was no general provision this quarter compared to \$149 million in the prior year and \$156 million in the prior quarter. We also had lower specific PCL compared to both periods driven by lower provisions in Capital Markets and International Banking. Compared to last quarter, specific PCL decreased \$234 million as discussed below.

In Canadian Banking, specific PCL of \$318 million was essentially flat from last quarter due to increased provisions in our business lending portfolio,

largely offset by lower provisions in our credit card and unsecured personal portfolios. In International Banking, specific PCL of \$175 million decreased \$54 million compared to last quarter, primarily attributable to our U.S. residential builder finance portfolio resulting from stabilizing asset quality. Provisions related to certain AFS securities reclassified to loans recorded in the prior quarter also contributed to the decrease. In Capital Markets, specific PCL of \$30 million decreased \$190 million, as last quarter had a few large client provisions. Credit quality has generally improved from the prior year and quarter reflecting the stabilization of asset quality. The sustainability of the current level of PCL remains uncertain at this time and will be dependent upon the entrenchment of the economic recovery and improvement in unemployment levels. □

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*** HUMAN HINTS ***

Ancient Indian Text Decoded - Part 1

For the next few days, we will explore the ancient story of the Bhagavad Gita. Within this ancient Indian text, lies a fundamental secret of life as a Human on three dimensional Earth. With this knowledge, you wield the power to rise above your body's emotions, and to transcend three dimensions.

After we recall the story, we will explore what it means to us as Humans evolving into a higher plane of expression, while stuck in three dimensional every day life.

Our story begins with two warring factions of cousins. One side represents the energies of fairness, contemplation and patience before action. The other side is paranoid,

seeing imaginary threats everywhere, especially from their cousins. They thrive on discontent, they are disorganized and restless. They often act hastily, without thinking things through, and they hurt themselves in the long run.

The two warring factions of the same family have amassed vast armies and untold powerful magic far beyond what present day Humanity can be trusted with. For 13 years, the factions have been preparing for war against each other. One side prepared with meditation, while the other actively built a huge, terrifying, finely-tuned army of warrior demons, built to destroy whatever

crossed its path.

As dawn broke on the day of the battle, the moment became surreal, ethereal, an instant stretched into eternity. Earth had never before witnessed the immensity of these two armies, now awaiting the signal for the war to officially begin. A comet of dust arise between the vast armies, as Arjuna and his charioteer Krishna appear.

The armies await the sound of the conch shell to signify the beginning of the epic battle. The great warrior Arjuna, General of the army that prepared for war in meditation, stands upon his golden chariot between the armies. Slowly, he brings the conch shell to his

quivering lips. As he draws in a breath, his knees grow weak. Arjuna stumbles off of the chariot, throws his weapons to the dusty ground, and falls to his knees in a plea to Krishna.

It may seem odd that a general would turn to a chauffeur for guidance at the most critical moment of his life. In fact, the General Arjuna chose Krishna to be his driver because of the rumors going around. It is said that Krishna is actually the God Vishnu, incarnated in Human form. They say that Vishnu is here to bring about destruction and to usher in a new age of enlightenment on Earth.

Arjuna remains prostrate before Krishna, unarmed, pleading for guidance, while the vast armies face each other, awaiting the signal to unleash unknown destruction.

Krishna, the human incarnation of the god Vishnu, looks down upon the prostrate General Arjuna and says, "What is this mad and shameful weakness?

Stand up and fight!"

Until Tomorrow...

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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ORANJESTAD - Enjoy your Paella and Sangria together with this fantastic live show! The downtown atmosphere is cool and relaxed with its in- and outside seating.

Our Flamenco Show will be extended this Holiday Season with the performance of Kavey Yarzagaray. This Flamenco guitar player will perform together with Angela Croes on Friday night. This is a show that shouldn't be missed.

The highlight at Casa Tua Barcelona is also the new lunch specials every weekday from Monday till Friday! **A \$9.95 lunch special; Beef tenderloin with a red wine sauce or choose the Grouper Fillet for \$11.95. Both dishes include a soft drink. Fresh Fish lovers can treat the palate to the Whole Red Snapper, served with Rice and a salad.**

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Negra which we import directly from Andalucía. As your main course you could choose our Paella, traditionally prepared on the spot by our chef! Combine this Spanish dish with our home-made sangria to complete your dinner.

Of course we saved the best for last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu. If you're into something different we suggest tasting the Espresso Martini Cocktail as dessert, you won't be disappointed.

The best part about such a good ending is that it guarantees you'll be back for more...



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STEINFELD: 'MAGIC LIVE!' Theater-of-illusions show... now at the WESTIN - Aruba, see it live! 9pm nightly NightMagic-Comedy- Master of illusions. PREPARE to Witness TOP-Class Illusions, Magic & Comedy on Stage. Adam Steinfeld's Magic Live!® show, at the WESTIN - Aruba... 'Sensational!', 'Amazingly Funny!'...the Hottest ticket in Town! A Must See" 'BEST MAGIC SHOW, I've seen in ages...and I hate Magic! - Carol Butz, Belair, Maryland.

'MagicLive!...is Hip-Comedy Entertainment, Adam is the ultimate Modern Magician' - Jacque Polak, CBS-TV. Steinfeld sophisticated card-sharp street magic, mixed with grand theater illusions is a visual feast...this will be the highlight of your vacation. -Al Blanchard, mystery novelist, Boston, MA.

Steinfeld's, comedy magician, likable on-stage personality, comic interactive-wit, and amazing magic, mixed with his dream-like theatre-of-

illusions, is a sensory overload of the imagination, along with his lovely dancers...a treat for the entire family.

SEE IT LIVE! On-Stage!

"It's obvious Adam's real passion is performing in front of a live audience, as his charisma and charm create an unforgettable show!" Steinfeld is a 'Master of Magic', he invents many of his own Las Vegas illusions that are designed in England, fabricated in Vegas, and travels with him on tour, in a explosion of amazing fun.

THE MUST-SEE SHOW - YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT! AROUND THE WORLD AND BACK, Adam Steinfeld: 'MAGIC LIVE!', from Monte Carlo, Hong Kong, Orlando, Miami Beach, Biloxi, Boston, San Juan, New York, Aruba to Vegas, it's the coolest show in town, taking up where Houdini left off." **MAGIC - GRANDILLUSION - COMEDY**



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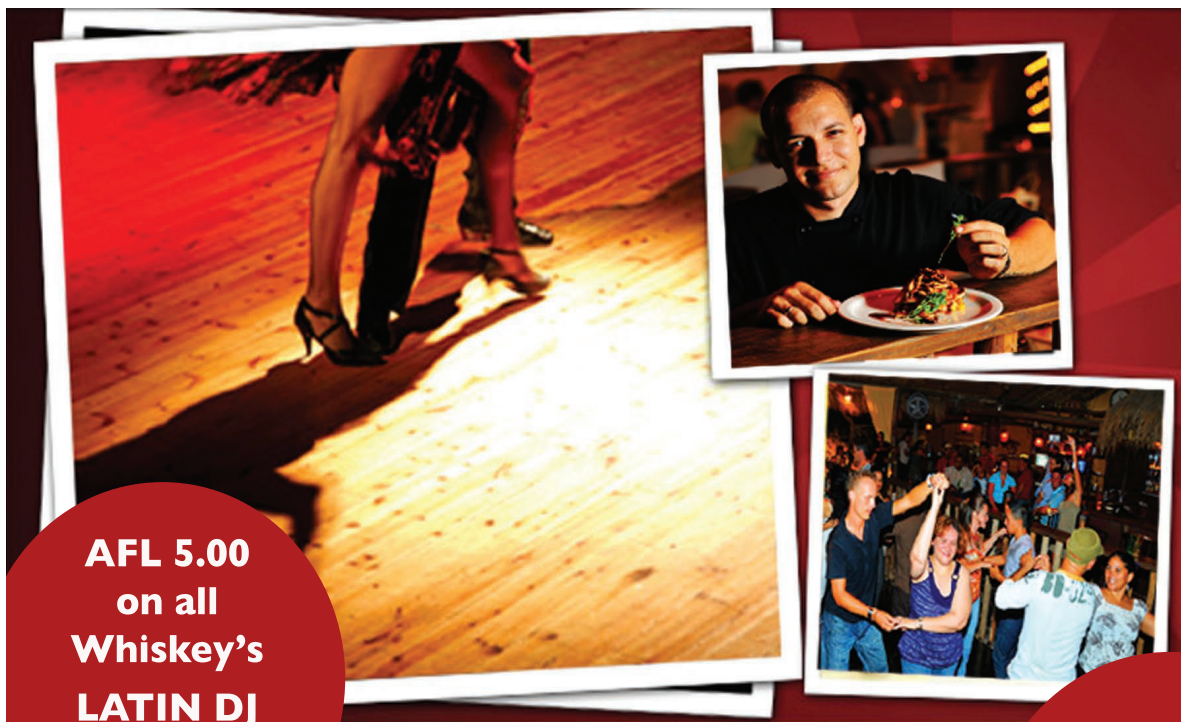
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Want to lose weight? Eat potatoes

By Marie Oser

What's the most popular vegetable in America? If you guessed potato, you are right! Plant foods, the exclusive source of dietary fiber, also provide us with precious vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. And since potatoes are grown throughout the year, they're also a fresh, seasonal and sustainable option for your winter meals. Unfortunately, potatoes have often been denounced as fattening, and the anti-carb craze of recent years has only added to that undeserved perception. Weight control is rapidly becoming the major health issue of the 21st century. More than a third of adults in the U.S. are overweight and obesity is reaching epidemic

proportions. We know that potatoes are great tasting, inexpensive, and nutritious, but how does this versatile vegetable become part of the solution?

Medical and nutrition experts have long advocated the health benefits of a diet rich in fruits and vegetables. Potatoes are root vegetables and complex carbohydrates high in water-absorbing fiber. Therefore eating potatoes makes you feel more satisfied and less hungry and can actually help you to lose weight.

Potatoes are 99.9 percent fat-free, 100 percent cholesterol free, and have the same amount of calories as a large apple.

However, potatoes are often drenched in butter or fatty toppings, which is where the over-the-top calories, fat, and

cholesterol are added.

Does that mean we should we give up luscious toppings and creamy sauces? Not at all!

There is a better way to create the rich texture and creamy flavor normally associated with dairy. The key is to replace animal products with wholesome plant based alternatives that impart these characteristics without heart-heavy cholesterol and saturated fat.

For instance, the recipe for Louisiana Stuffed Potatoes with Cajun 'Cream' Sauce (below) makes a delicious entrée with a richly flavorful sauce.

This satisfying dish is easy to make and has 11 grams of protein, 8 grams of fiber, and just 3 grams of fat per serving.



Potato Pizzas



1 large baking potato per person
pizza sauce (recipe below)
your choice of toppings (I used onion, bell pepper, zucchini, calamata olives, green olives, and mushrooms)
fresh basil
soy parmesan

Pizza Sauce (makes enough for 2 servings/potatoes):

1/2 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced or pressed
1 can diced tomatoes (I used Italian style)
1/8 tsp. fennel seed
1/2 tsp. oregano
1/2 tsp. basil

salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Start with potatoes that are at least 1-1/2 inches thick in the middle. Scrub each potato well. Cut into three slices, making the outer two a little wider than the middle one. Take the two outer slices and trim a little bit off the bottom (rounded side) in order to make them lie flat.

Place them on an oiled baking sheet and bake at 350 F for about 40 minutes, until cooked throughout. (I was just making one serving, so I did this in the toaster oven with excellent results.)

While the potatoes are cooking, make the pizza sauce: Sauté the onion in a non-stick saucepan until it becomes translucent. Add the garlic and sauté one minute more. Pour about 1/3 of the can of tomatoes into the saucepan. Using a blender or hand blender, puree the remaining tomatoes and add them to the pan. (I do this right in the can with a hand blender.) Add the remaining sauce ingredients, and simmer on low until the potatoes are ready.

When the potatoes are done, take them out of the oven, spread each one with sauce, and top with your choice of toppings. (I made one with zucchini-calamata olives-red bell pepper, another with mushrooms-green olives-onions, and another with everything.) Put them back into the oven and bake for 15-20 more minutes, until the toppings are done to your taste.

Remove from the oven and sprinkle with lots of fresh basil and soy parmesan, if desired. Careful, they will be hot! But once they're cooled, you can pick them up like regular pizza.

Louisiana Stuffed Potatoes With Cajun Cream Sauce



Pop the potatoes into the oven and whip up the mushroom filling and Cajun sauce while the potatoes bake.

6 Servings

6 Russet potatoes
1 1/2 tsp. olive oil
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 medium red onion, chopped
1 rib celery, chopped
1/3 cup chopped yellow bell pepper
6 oz. cremen mushrooms, sliced
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
2 Tablespoons chopped black olives
1 Tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 Tablespoon tamari
3 Tablespoons nutritional yeast
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil
dash hot pepper sauce, to

taste
Sauce
2 tsp. olive oil
1/8 tsp. crushed red pepper
1 clove garlic, minced
1 1/2 tablespoons unbleached flour
1 1/3 cups hot vegetable broth
1/3 cup soy milk
1/2 cup nutritional yeast
1 teaspoon Bragg Liquid Aminos
1 teaspoon dried chives

Directions:

Preheat oven to 425°. Bake potatoes on middle rack 1 hour or until fork-tender.

Mushroom Filling: Heat oil in a 10" frying pan, 1 minute. Add garlic, onion, bell pepper, and celery, 3 minutes. Add mushrooms, tomatoes and olives. Cook mixture 5 minutes, stirring

frequently. Add remaining ingredients lower heat to simmer and cover until ready to assemble.

Cajun Sauce: Heat oil, crushed pepper and garlic in a saucepan, over medium heat for 2 minutes. Add flour and cook while stirring until beginning to brown, about 2 minutes. Stir in the broth add when thickening add the soy milk, yeast, Bragg Aminos, and chives. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring frequently.

Assembly: Cut an "X" into each potato when cool enough to handle, and press sides gently to open. Scoop out 1 tablespoon of pulp from each potato and add to stuffing mixture. Spoon stuffing into and over potatoes. Serve immediately.

Louisiana Stuffed Potatoes With Cajun 'Cream' Sauce

Nutrition analysis per serving: One stuffed potato with sauce
Protein 11g, Carbohydrate 64g, Fiber 8g, Fat 3g, Cholesterol 0mg, Calcium 52mg, Sodium 390mg
Calories 320 from protein: 13%, from carbohydrate: 77%, from fat: 9%

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Commission: Bad governance if Dollison, Buncamper punished

PHILIPSBURG--It would be against the principles of good governance and "fair play" if the Executive Council chooses to discipline Sector Director of ROB (Ruimtelijke Ordening en Beheer) Joseph Dollison and Head of Maintenance Claudius Buncamper for mismanagement of the department without investigating other management heads of the ROB department.

So says the three-member commission appointed by the Executive Council to determine a way forward following the SOAB's (Government Accountant Bureau) report on the issuance of building permits. The commission drew several conclusions, mostly not in favour of imposing disciplinary measures, after it reviewed the SOAB's report and concluded that there were no grounds to punish Dollison and Buncamper.

The credibility of the commission was recently brought into question when the SOAB stated that the commission members could have misinterpreted a standard statement at the beginning of its report on the ROB department. The commission advised the Executive Council that there are no grounds for disciplinary measures against Dollison and Buncamper as the SOAB itself indicated that the accuracy of its findings could not be verified and thus not relied upon.

In response to that, the SOAB explained that if this was indeed part of the committee's conclusion, such a conclusion is wrong and if the committee had reached out to the SOAB for an explanation, which it did not, possible misinterpretation could have been avoided. It further states that SOAB only gives assurance on what is

reported. It is not an audit or review of a financial statement or any other kind of statement. The SOAB did admit last week that the language it used could have been somewhat complicated to understand. However, the commission members, chaired by attorney Amador Muller who is joined by legal advisor Carolien de Wilde and Luud Hakkens of the Personnel Affairs Department, pointed out in its advice that they were not allowed to question other members of management at ROB to verify SOAB's findings. In other words, their scope of work, as indicated by the Executive Council, was limited to a review of the SOAB's report.

They stated that Dollison and Buncamper did not work and are not working in a vacuum. They said "gross mismanagement," as is alleged by the SOAB, could not have taken place without illicit cooperation of lower management.

They added that the fact that the Executive Council had not conducted a complete verification process of the SOAB's findings, which Buncamper and Dollison dismissed as hearsay, "makes is difficult and impossible" for them to issue a conclusive report on the functioning or lack thereof, of Dollison and Buncamper or if they are indeed responsible.

The commission also emphasised that a formal evaluation of Dollison and Buncamper, before the SOAB finalised its report in March 2009, never took place. Dollison only received an audience with the Island Secretary on September 28, 2009 while Buncamper was never afforded the opportunity to be heard.

Both men who stand accused, the commission said, admitted to shortcomings at their department and expressed their willingness to cooperate with the execution of an SOAB-recommended improvement plan for the department. Dollison and Buncamper also expressed this to the SOAB during its inquiries. If they did not adhere to the improvement plan, the Executive Council could then impose disciplinary measures for dereliction of duty.

The SOAB outlined the scope of its improvement plan in its final report, but also indicated that it was doomed to failure if Dollison and Buncamper were not removed from their positions.

Additionally, the commission advised the Executive Council to ensure that the SOAB,

when given such assignments in the future, base its report on information which can be verified by facts.

Should the Executive Council proceed with disciplinary measures against Buncamper and Dollison, both are expected to take government to court. Furthermore, all of the persons who spoke to the SOAB during its investigation are also expected to be summoned.

Dollison is his response to the SOAB's concept report last year said the use of words like "probable" and "expect" and statements like "we could not determine" rendered the report completely absurd and the charges against personnel undeserved. He said it was unthinkable that the Executive Council would identify any punishable acts based on a

"hearsay" report.

Buncamper stated at the time that the concept report was suggestive, filled with non-factual statements, lacked understanding of the functioning of ROB and VROM, misinterpreted a number of procedures, and was based on hearsay from the convicted former head of VROM.

Despite the report of its own appointed commission advising no disciplinary measures, the Executive Council last week took a decision to discipline Buncamper and Dollison. Details of this decision are not yet known. The members of the National Alliance faction are in favour while their coalition partner and independent Commissioner Theo Heyliger voted against. □

Roy chides Illidge on service level agreements statement

PHILIPSBURG--Former commissioner of finance and Island Council Member Roy Marlin said on Wednesday he was "totally flabbergasted" by the statement of Minister of Telecommunications Patrick Illidge about St. Maarten having to set up service level agreements with different institutions in Curaçao.

Marlin took exception, in particular, to Illidge's claim that the DP government turned its back on young professionals by stating they are over-qualified and that the DP should have hired these persons to fill these functions since 2000.

"What comes first, the chicken or the egg? In this case, if decisions were taken by the Central Government to transfer tasks by a particular date, then the Executive Council could have gone ahead and hire persons to fill these functions and execute the task. Unfortunately, under the NA, who has sat in the Central Government since 2006, not one single task was transferred. Should we have hired persons since 2000 to just sit on the sidelines waiting on the Central Government to transfer tasks?" Marlin asked.

Marlin said the minister conveniently forgot that during the past four years the National Alliance had been represented in the Central

Government by two senators, one minister and one state secretary without any transfer of authority taking place during their term. "This was done because the NA in the Central Government didn't want to let things happen for the benefit of St. Maarten while the DP was in government on a local level," Marlin said.

"I want to refresh the memory of the minister to June 24, 2009 when Commissioner William Marlin and Prime Minister Emily de Jongh-Elhage signed the so-called budget neutral branch offices accord and the agreement of June 25, 2009 signed between Commissioner Marlin and State Secretary [Ank] Bijleveld-[Schouten] at which signing the Commissioner said, 'this will see the Dutch Government working closely in July 2009 with St. Maarten to ascertain the expertise needed'," Marlin said. "William Marlin also stated that the public will see setting up of offices or the expansion of service departments and agencies overseen by the Central Government in St. Maarten. Since these agreements were signed, how much was done by the Central Government in executing these two agreements? By the way, the now Minister Illidge was functioning as State Secretary since these agreements were signed. What did he do to champion the execution of these agreements?" Marlin said. □



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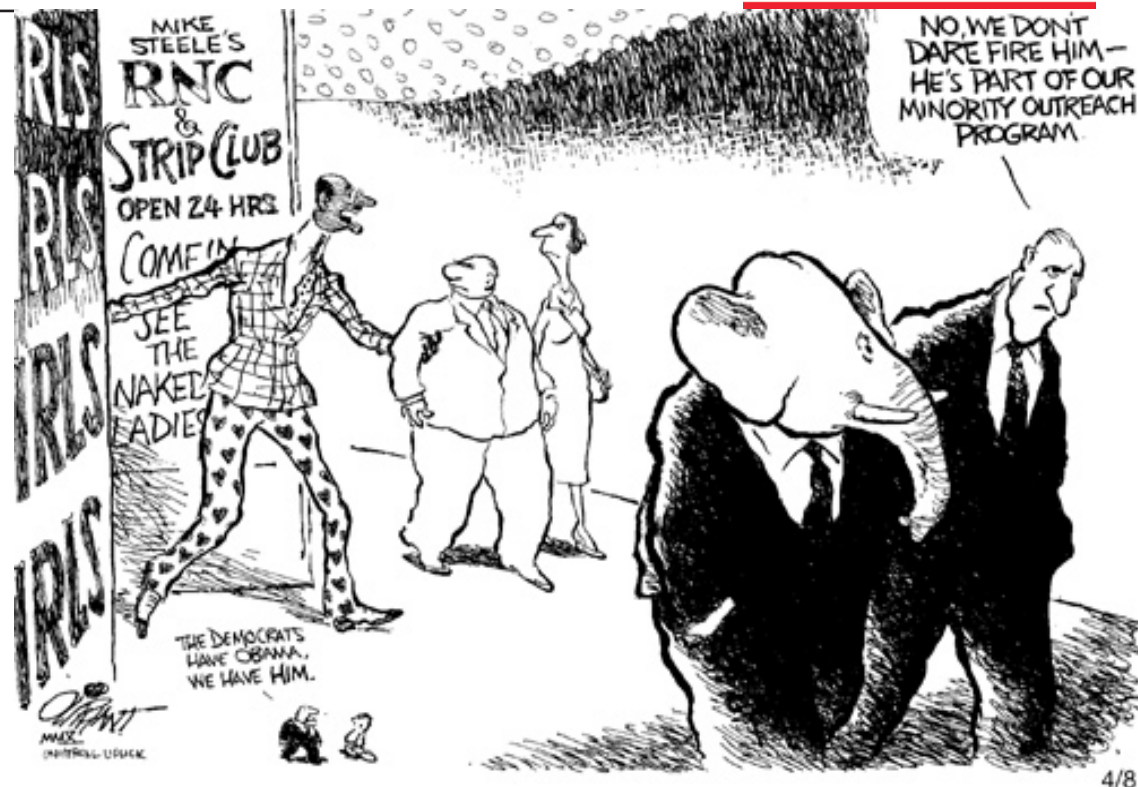
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The real intern scandal: working without pay privileges the privileged

By Danielle Connor

Boston – Internships are becoming a joke. Once a coveted form of apprenticeship, they're now a cynical way for companies to trim labor costs. During this great recession, more and more students and young people are accepting unpaid internships because there simply aren't paying gigs available.

Some employers are taking advantage of this, deceiving young people and offering shallow experiences that won't actually help them develop professional skills.

Now the Obama administration wants to crack down on these abusive practices.

"If you're a for-profit employer or you want to pursue an internship with a for-profit employer, there aren't going to be many circumstances where you can have an internship and not be paid and still be in compliance with the law," a Labor Department official told The New York Times this week.

Such accountability is welcome, but there's a deeper issue at stake: the way internships today privilege the privileged.

In an environment where getting a good job requires a long stint as an unpaid intern, only those with substantial savings can get ahead. So rather than act as a leveler, this great recession may end up providing a further boost to the prep-school crowd.

It seems the more competitive the field, the higher the entry fee. Aspiring lawyers and doctors who weren't born into wealth are cornered into immense debt situations, making the idea of pro bono work unrealistic to many even if that's why they started. Writers and filmmakers, among other artists and performers, are looking at enormous entry fees that might require years of low or unpaid work.

This all was news to me. I was raised with the idea that if you are willing to work and study hard you will make it. If you invest in your education by taking out student loans you will wind up in

a higher pay bracket. If you want to work, there will be a job for you. That's the story, anyway.

We take on debt because of the promise of upward mobility and attend expensive private colleges to gain edge.

When we get there, we meet students who have been bouncing from one enrichment program to the next and taking advantage of every summer opportunity. They've traveled around the world and developed a sexy skill set.

If it's worth nothing more, they've got the advantage at awkward networking parties. They've always made small talk with fancy people, whether while answering phones for a high-powered attorney their dad became friends with on a transatlantic flight, or sitting around their own dinner table.

Class issues aren't new, though access to education for middle-class families is. Working kids go to private schools and learn to run faster.

If you can't afford not to have an internship, and you can't afford not to have a job, you do both – and the stakes are high on either end because if either operation fails you are left in the lurch with no safety net.

The technical term for this in my family is "building character," and it's filed alongside stories about walking to school uphill, both ways.

In the fundamental first several years out of college many young people are forced to decide whether it is possible to pursue their dreams or not. Unfortunately, if there's no family money to keep you afloat, you are forced to take jobs miles away from your desired path. College passions become foolish ideals and the class system wins.

I was grateful to have the support of college funding to make my internship possible.

I can remember working at high noon in Patagonia, Ariz., on the border of Mexico at a seed conservation farm. There wasn't a cloud

in the sky. I was hoeing beans. I was an unpaid intern, and I cared about my job.

Everyone at Mount Holyoke College seemed to have summer opportunities like this. The air there made me believe anything was possible, and I was willing to go for it with little or no money in my pocket.

Through financial aid in the form of the Frances Perkins Program, the college funded three years of summer internships as part of my research to fulfill my independent major. Without that funding, I would never have been able to accept the volunteer positions.

These experiences are still opening doors for me. They provided the narrative for my first articles and video projects, building the portfolio to get the contracts I make my living with today.

Those internships granted me the privilege of "experience."

The issues we face, from war to poverty and environmental catastrophe require serious skills and creativity in developing solutions. What ever happened to mentorship? Who's going to step up and offer interns some real learning opportunities that will result in innovative leadership for the next generation?

Students must remember that the benefit of these internships is your personal narrative – who you are, where you've been, what you've worked on. People get the impression that you are committed to your work. In some circles it's a credibility badge – a key. The tragedy lies in keys being passed between the same people with every generation. We have the collective resources to change this fate.

If it weren't for my unpaid internships I highly doubt I would be in a position today to make my living as a freelance writer, producer, and campaign consultant. It was the internships that qualified me for my first couple important entry-level jobs in the nonprofit world, which have given me the skills and experience to do what I want now. □

Buscan víctimas de nuevo deslave en Río, 153 muertos

NITEROI, Brasil (Reuters) - Socorristas trabajaban frenéticamente ayer para encontrar a residentes sepultados por un nuevo deslave cerca de Río de Janeiro, mientras que la cifra de fallecidos como consecuencia de las intensas lluvias en la segunda mayor ciudad de Brasil subía a 153. Lasmás fuertes precipitaciones registradas en la zona en más de cuatro décadas, que comenzaron el lunes, han provocado cerca de 200 deslaves que arrasaron con casas de favelas situadas en laderas de cerros, causando la mayoría de las muertes y dejando sin hogar a miles de personas. Los equipos de búsqueda rescataron a 21 personas desde los escombros de casas arrasadas por un deslave ocurrido el miércoles en la noche en la ciudad de Niterói, a pocos kilómetros de Río. Socorristas dijeron que seis cuerpos fueron sacados del



Los equipos de búsqueda rescataron a 21 personas desde los escombros de casas arrasadas por un deslave ocurrido el miércoles en la noche en la ciudad de Niterói, a pocos kilómetros de Río.

barro y creen que hay otras 70 personas desaparecidas como consecuencia de ese incidente. Varios medios locales dijeron que 200 personas se encontraban sepultadas en ese lugar como consecuencia del deslave, algunas de ellas citando a la agencia de defensa civil de Río de Janeiro. El vicegobernador del estado de Río de Janeiro, Luiz Fernando Pezao, declaró que

alrededor de 200 personas vivían en Morro de Bumba, pero que no había forma de saber cuántos más había ahí cuando ocurrió el deslave. Funcionarios de la defensa civil contactados por Reuters

también dijeron que no podían confirmar la información.

SOLICITUD DE FONDOS
Autoridades afirman que al menos 10.000 casas aún están en riesgo de derrumbe y el Gobierno federal envió a más fuerzas de seguridad para ayudar en las operaciones de rescate. El alcalde de Río de Janeiro, Eduardo Paes, solicitó al Gobierno federal 370 millones de reales (208 millones de dólares) en ayuda para operaciones de emergencia. Grandes olas rompían en la famosa playa Copacabana de Río mientras se reanudaban las lluvias y las autoridades advertían a la gente que no nadara ni practicara surf hasta que las condiciones volvieran a la normalidad. La mayor parte de los daños se concentra en favelas donde vive alrededor de una quinta parte de la población de Río, a menudo en precarias viviendas. □

Condenan a casi siete años de cárcel a sacerdote colombiano por pedofilia

BOGOTÁ (AFP) - El sacerdote católico colombiano José Virgilio Chona fue condenado a seis años y ocho meses de cárcel por un juez de la ciudad de Cúcuta (600 km al noreste de Bogotá) por abusos sexuales contra un menor. El sacerdote, de 58 años, y quien se encontraba bajo detención domiciliaria, fue acusado en 2005 de haber abusado del joven, cuando éste tenía 13 años y ejercía de monaguillo. El sacerdote fue condenado a cerca de siete

años de prisión por el delito de abuso sexual agravado y además deberá pagar al joven una multa de 25 millones de pesos (cerca de 13.000 dólares), señaló la sentencia del juez cuarto penal de Cúcuta. La condena fue interpelada por la defensa del sacerdote y deberá ser evaluada por el Tribunal Superior de Cúcuta, según indicaron medios de prensa, que señalaron además que el prelado fue trasladado a la cárcel local. □

Hallan en Colombia los cuerpos de 8 mineros supuestamente asesinados por las FARC

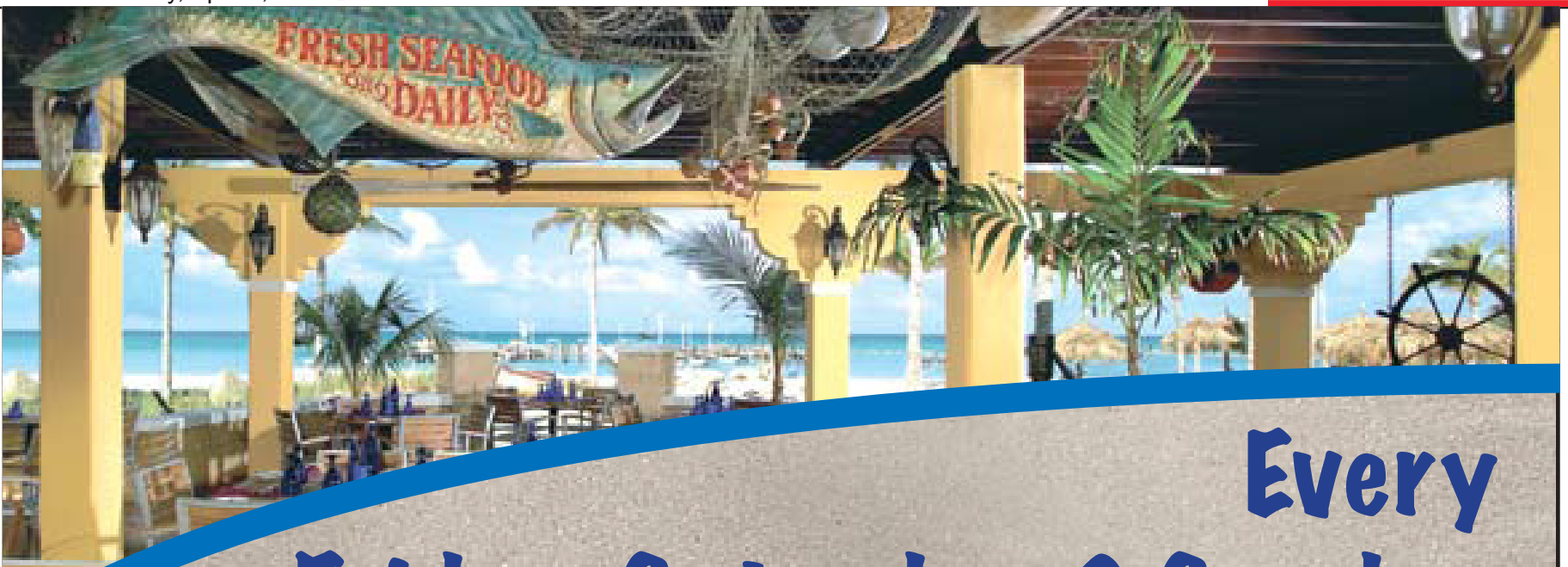
Bogotá, 8 abr (EFE) - Las autoridades colombianas hallaron ayer los cuerpos sin vida de ocho personas que supuestamente habrían sido disparadas por guerrilleros de las FARC en las inmediaciones de una mina de oro situada en un paraje montañoso del departamento del Cauca, en el suroeste del país. Según la emisora Caracol Radio, las autoridades conocieron este hecho gracias al testimonio de un

minero que acompañaba a los fallecidos y que fingió su muerte durante la agresión. Este testigo, que resultó herido, relató que un grupo de hombres armados y encapuchados sorprendió a los mineros, les indicó que no debían estar en esa zona y les disparó hasta provocarles la muerte. Al sitio conocido como "Alto de Ovejas", en el municipio de Suárez, han ido llegando el Ejército, la policía y funcionarios del Cuerpo

Técnico de Investigación (CTI) de la Fiscalía, quienes apuntaron que los asaltantes presuntamente son rebeldes de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). El alcalde de Suárez, Luis Antonio Colorado, indicó en Caracol Radio que los mineros fallecidos no eran del municipio, sino que habían acudido al lugar movidos por la "fiebre del oro". □

Cuba acusa a EEUU y Europa de campaña para derrocar revolución

LA HABANA (Reuters) - Cuba acusó a Estados Unidos y Europa de implementar una "febril" campaña para "demonizar" al país y desestabilizarlo con la excusa de que no se respetan los derechos humanos en la isla, dijo el jueves el Gobierno. En un extenso editorial, Granma, el diario del gobernante Partido Comunista, dijo que sus enemigos en Estados Unidos y algunos gobiernos en Europa intentan desacreditar a la revolución y poner fin a su sistema socialista unipartidista, lanzando a la muerte a "sus mercenarios". "El imperio y sus aliados se han lanzado a una nueva cruzada para intentar demonizar a Cuba. Su poderosa maquinaria política y mediática ha puesto en marcha una colosal operación de engaño con el objetivo de desacreditar el proceso revolucionario, desestabilizar al país (...)", dijo el periódico. Las autoridades comunistas consideran a los opositores "mercenarios" a sueldo de Washington y por ellos condenaron a 75 disidentes a penas de entre seis y 28 años de cárcel en marzo del 2003, un hecho que fue duramente criticado por la comunidad internacional. El presidente Raúl Castro dijo el domingo en un discurso que la isla no cedería a los chantajes de sus enemigos y afirmó que el Gobierno no será responsable por la posible muerte de un segundo disidente en huelga de hambre. Guillermo Fariñas comenzó su huelga de hambre el 24 de febrero, días después de la muerte del preso político Orlando Zapata luego de 85 días de ayuno, a quien el Gobierno acusa de haber sido un "delincuente común". □



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